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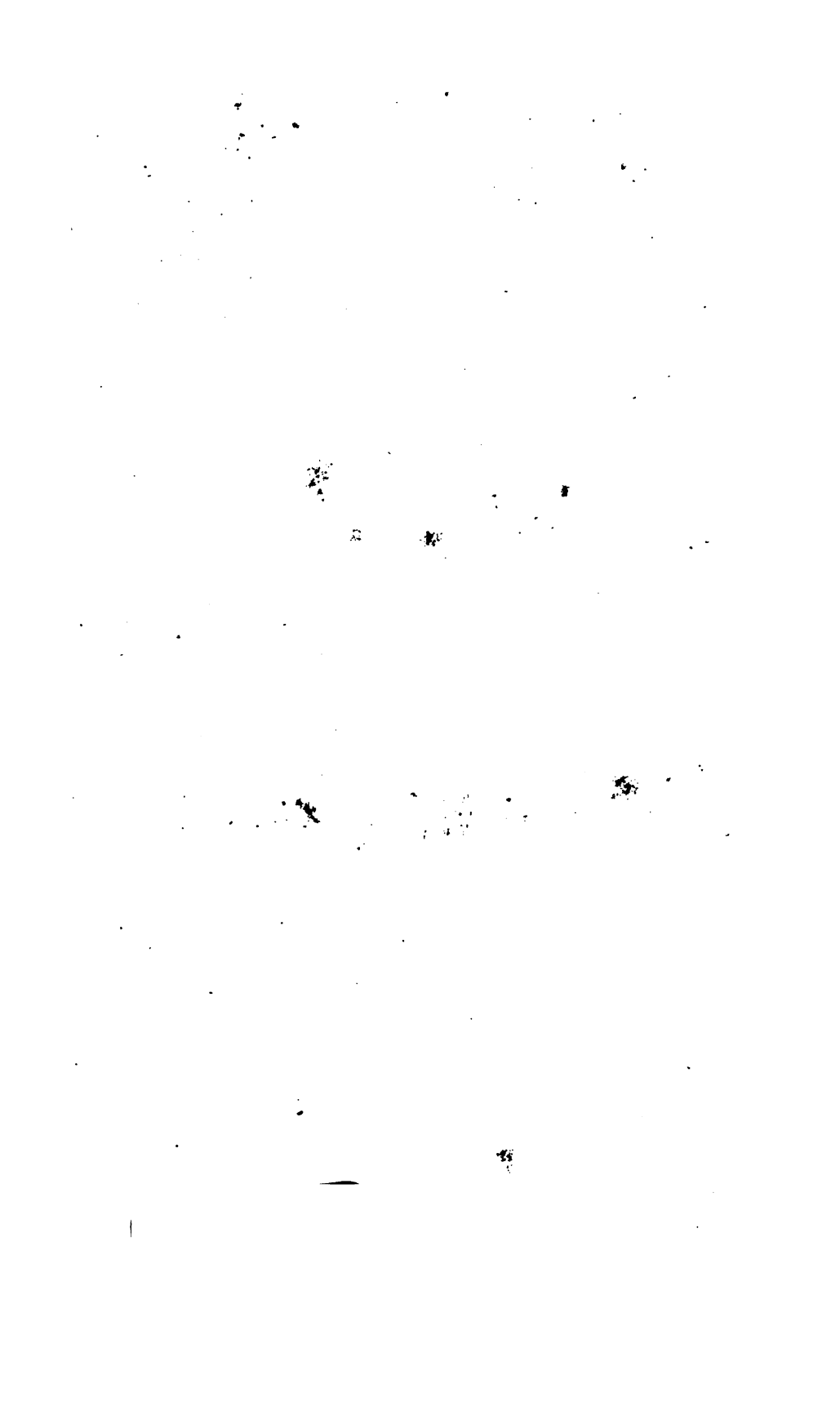
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HISTORICAL and FAMILIAR
E S S A Y S,
O N T H E
Scriptures
O F T H E
Old Testament.

BY J O H N C O L L I E R,
LATE OF CHARTER-HOUSE SQUARE, LONDON;
NOW OF HIGH-WYCOMBE, BUCKS.

*“ These S T U D I E S improve Youth, and are
“ the Embellishment and Joy of Age, they add Grace
“ and Dignity to Prosperity, and afford the surest
“ Refuge and Consolation in Adversity, they delight
“ us at Home, and are no hindrance to Enjoyment
“ Abroad, they go to Bed with us, Travel with
“ us, and are our Companions in the Country.”*

CICERO.

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

V O L. I.

HIGH-WYCOMBE

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AN
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS
TO THE
R E A D E R.

AFTER the Destruction, total Overthrow, and Extirpation of its ancient Inhabitants, the Land of CANAAN rose to Dignity, Opulence, and Power. It exhibited, under the Jewish Monarchy, a new Scene of Magnificence and Splendour, became the politest and most celebrated Court in the Universe, the Seat of Empire and of Glory.

Its History, its matchless Fertility, distinguished Honours, Customs, Usages and Laws, its Religion and Government are the Subjects of these ESSAYS.

Every serious Attempt to improve the rising Generation, however puerile, viewed as an Encouragement to Virtue, and a Means of suppressing Vice and Immorality, will meet a candid Reception and Support. Some abler Pen, a Friend to Youth and Innocence, on such a Foundation may erect a Superstructure of rational Enquiry, and rescue the untutored Mind from Prejudice, Error, and Superstition.

And in a Country so divinely blessed, where Virtue is fostered and cherished at the Throne, and its influence enforced by Example, we may cheerfully look for Success.

To my numerous Friends, whose respectful Notice, has crowned my days with Honour and added happiness to existence, now (in life's decline) I humbly offer a tribute of Labour and Love.

What

What afforded me Pleasure in Solitude and Retirement, I was desirous of communicating to Others. Would to God, it might impart comfort to a sorrowing Mind, by wisely and usefully employing it, and enlist in the pursuit of Religious Knowledge, the Hour of Dissipation or Indulgence.

All under sufferings, I would with earnestness persuade to read and study the Holy Scriptures. Extraordinary Events excite our wonder and astonishment in proportion to the Credit they deserve, but the Sacred Historian, reverentially looked up to, will interest you most wonderfully of all, for of Histories true or fictitious, none is so awfully curious, affecting and delightful, none so simply told and so Authentic.

Conscious of their dignity, the Inspired Prophets, and venerable Sages of Antiquity, describe Characters and Passions,

just as they beheld them, without Flattery or Disguise. The Vicious and Ungodly (be their stations encircled in royalty, or their Memoirs ever so heroic) are ushered in with a Regret, on purpose to be condemned and exhibit a picture of abhorrence. While virtuous Actions, the Deeds of the Righteous are here registered, become a part of Holy Writ, and are honourably applauded for ever:

These Sacred Records, This very first Book ever wrote furnishes us with Examples, the wisest Maxims, Precepts and Rules of Life, the graceful Ornament of Youth, and they add Dignity to riper Years, and Veneration and Respect to Age.

From referring Events and Transactions only to a first Cause, and over-looking intermediate and more ordinary Ones, some have thought the Jewish History not founded on the Principles of others, and incapable

(4)
ble of being examined by their general Rules and Laws. Memorable and highly astonishing Revolutions of Kingdoms and Empires were brought about visibly, and most conspicuously, by the Hand of the Almighty, and you must read such Illustrious Annals with the profoundest Reverence and Awe; but the Israelites considered as a People, their gradual Progress as a Nation, their Principles, Manners, Customs, Government, Revolutions, Forces and Revenues very much correspond with those of others.

Throughout every Age, Human Nature is seen maintaining its rank in the Creation, improving with Arts and Science. A Period so dark, clouded, and unknown, Mankind in Infancy, the rude beginnings of Order and Civilization in very slow Progression, bespeaks your Candour, and must be viewed under much Distrust and Obscurity.

The

The HEBREWS, an immense Body of People, confined to a Corner only of the World, and but lately let loose from the House of Bondage, a Rabble of Slaves, under Pagan Prejudices, Ignorant and uncultivated, you look back on their flourishing History, and speedy Advancement with Surprise; the Tribe of Judah only had more than Fifty Capital Towns.

The Natural, very slow progress of Light and Knowledge in Countries and Kingdoms, compared with the rapid Advance it made among the Israelites is wonderful, you will read of it among them, far more usefully diffused, than in the History of any other Nation or Empire in the World, and this superior Light burst forth at a Time, when the Jewish Laws strictly forbade all Union and Connections with Foreign Kingdoms, all National Intercourse whatever, and must confessedly be ascribed to their Religious Advantages, obviously influential.

fluent in introducing among them a Knowledge of Science, the useful Branches of Mechanics, Geometry and the Mathematics, seen first in Altars, Monuments and Pillars, and afterwards so astonishingly displayed on Mount Moriah, in the construction of Magnificent Palaces and Temples, the Court of Audience, the celebrated Porch, and Splendid Throne of Solomon.

The State of Arts and Sciences, at that early Period, is accurately described by the Prophet Ezekiel and in the Book of Kings, more than a Thousand Years before the Birth of our Saviour.

In Elegance of Language, and Beauty of Composition, the Jews held a high Pre-eminence. Homer and Hesiod were contemporaries with David, but Moses wrote his History four Centuries before, and Moses's Song, although the most ancient,

is the sublimest piece of Poetry in the World. The Psalms of David, (only four Hundred Years after) are unequalled in Magnanimity and Sweetness, Praises and Thanksgivings, irresistibly engaging you in Converse with God.

Solomon shone the first Moralist and Literary Character, but do you not give the Preference to the Book of Job? Where Sentiment (although strip't of its rich Attire and Poetic Sweetness) flows in a swelling Tide of Majesty, the Embellishment of Literature, the Model of Sublime. Were we asked for a Specimen of the Dignities and Beauties of Jewish Authors, the Prophecies of Isaiah, are uttered in enraptured Strains, divinely impressive, and a Loftiness and Grandeur, an animated Style abounding with Imagery and the boldest Figures, characterizes the writings of all the Lesser Prophets, distinguished by their Spirit, Impetuosity and Eloquence.

In another point of view, the History will strike you with fresh Wonder, on' a survey of the Wisdom of God, and the Ways of Providence conducting the Israelite to Conquest and Empire. Tracing the finger of the Almighty selecting out his Instrument, protecting the Innocent, and exalting the Humble, executing his Vengeance on the Guilty, though encircled in the highest Dignities, bringing about his wise Designs, by secret influence on the Mind, or by open and awful tokens of Displeasure, striking the Assassin dead, distracting him with Terror, or casting him out a loathsome Leper. At one Time sending Famine or Pestilence upon a People, whom no kindness could reclaim, or raining down fire and brimstone on a City and its Inhabitants. At another Time mercifully sparing the Multitude, but singling out the Ring-leader and most obstinate Revolters, causing them to hear his

voice in the Thunder, or opening the Earth to swallow them up. How great our surprize, when He laid bare His Arm, and conducted the Israelites, all on foot, through the the Red Sea, to the Wilderness of Etham, and drowned an Egyptian Prince, and his Mighty Host pursuing them. More then once, destroying by Tempest a Philistine Army in full view of the Armies of Israel. With perfect ease effecting his designs, throwing a Multitude into a panick, making them their own destroyers. Thus allotting Victory to Israel, even when she had not drawn a Sword. His People, he sent, to gather up the Spoil, and three whole days they gathered it.

So illustriously do these Annals display the irresistible Power and the Majesty of God, his never ceasing Providence and just Severity.

Throughout

Throughout the Jewish History, Virtue is in this Life distinguishingly rewarded, and Vice is almost always punished. The Jew was therefore depressed under sufferings, he could only sorrow in Adversity, it is the Privilege of the Christian and his Glory to rejoice.

Though I can never speak too highly of the Religious advantages of the Israelite, nor enough venerate the glorious manifestation and extraordinary Providence with which he was blessed, yet the Religion prescribed him was ceremonious, and Jewish Ceremonies, in their Pomp and Splendour, resembled Pagan. A part of it was called the Ceremonial Law, and intended, by degrees, to usher in the Christian Æra.

It was a figure only, expressly called a Shadow of good things to come. St. Paul resembles the Jewish Worship to a State of Infancy, Rites and Ceremonies adapted to

the Capacities of Children. The true Light, here kindled and preserved, was to blaze out at a distant Period, be gradually diffused over the World, and advance more and more to the Majesty and full lustre of meridian Day. The Jew had no clear Idea of pure and spiritual Devotion, he had witnessed the Pageantry of Pagan Ceremonies, visible objects of his worship, and Ceremony with the Jew was a rivited prejudice, as congenial with his Ideas, as Fluidity with his Rivers, or Light with Day. He could never raise his thoughts to the contemplation of a pure Spirit, unseen and incomprehensible. One Supreme Father of all, ever present in Power and yet no where in appearance was far above his conception. Something of shape and figure, was a God more familiar to him, easier known, one that aided his fancy, and (as he thought) excited Devotion; such he had every day witnessed in Egypt. Hence, throughout
their

their whole History, you will notice a wonderful prone-ness to Idolatry, and the high Offence it gave; they found it a Religion easy to practise, what the vicious and most abandoned could follow, Pagan worship requiring no Morality, favoured all their passions, was friendly and alluring to their vices, to their darling and most criminal indulgencies.

An ostensible part of the Jewish worship was Sacrifice. As Farmers and Herdsmen much of the riches of the People consisted in their Cattle, and by offering up a part of their food and property to God, they acknowledged his Gifts and Superintendency. But Sacrifices were also Fines and Punishments, Sin was hereby made chargeable and costly to the Transgressor. The placability of God was pleasingly exhibited in his acceptance of the offering, and thus allaying the fears, and quieting the conscience of the penitent offender. Some Sacrifices were called
Thankf-

Thanksgivings, and then the offender collected his Friends and made a feast; a part of the fat was burnt on the Altar, one joint was a fee belonging to the Priest, and all the rest eat up with his Party. Emblemat-ically they exhibited the odious nature of sin, so deserving of death, and by an apt figure they held up, in perpetual view, the Lamb of God, the Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, hereafter to be made. Without the Death of Christ, how unmeaning the Pomp and Splendour of Jewish Ceremonies?

Another part of their Religion was commemorative Feasts and Solemn Fasts. The Tabernacle Feast reminded them of their long Journey through the Wilderness, the Pass-over, of their merciful Escape, when God smote the first born of Egypt. The Feast of Trumpets perpetuated the awful manner of giving the Law from Mount Sinai, and Pentecost was an acknowledgment

ment of the All-bounteous Giver, by offering him, the first fruits, of the year, of the Land of CANAAN.

Having ventured to mention the Extraordinary Providence exercised over the Jew, and also his Religion, I am descending to Manners, Dress, Customs, Usages, and Modes of Life to familiarize his Character to the Young, before they examine his History, his Laws and Government.

The Splendour of his City, Magnificence of his Palaces, and the Temple of his God are repeatedly displayed by the Sacred Historians.

Among the very poor, the Jewish garments were Hides, and dresses made of Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, Hair-cloth, coarse Hemp, whereof Sack-cloth was made, the deep and usual mourning of the Jew. But the richer were clad in fine linen, in silks, wollen clothes and rich
embroid-

embroideries; by express orders all of them wore fringes, a memorial of the Law of Jehovah which they were commanded to do. The Women were covered over with a Veil, and it was esteemed always immodest to appear abroad without one.

Of all colours, white was what they prized most, next to that blew, or sky colour, but on the change of Government and Reign of the Kings, Princes and Officers of the Household and Army began to wear more showy Colours, and Saul cloathed the, Daughters of Israel in scarlet, others were dressed in crimson, and the richest of all was purple.

The Grecian, and the Roman dress, is handed down to us in busts and pictures, but no figure or resemblance of a Jew was ever made. The Woman of fashion was clad in needle work, or rich stuffs from Tyre, they wore Jewels, and among other
orna-

ornaments, a tinkling bell on each leg, which gave a musical cadence to their steps,

The Mens dress consisted of a tunic and drawers of linen, and an upper garment like a loose cloak, occasionally wrapt round, and confined by a girdle, and on that girdle, hung his money bag. The upper garment, the Jew could never pawn for longer than the day, at night the pledge was always restored, for it was his blanket and night covering.

The Gallantry of the Jew did not consist in the fashion of his dress, but his number of changes, bright colours, rich fringes and embroideries. A fond Father decked his favourite boy in a coat of many colours, rainbow like, and at his wedding arrayed him in all his gayest ornaments, encircled him with flambeaus, and led him through the streets of Jerusalem. Thus, at midnight, was the Bridegroom, and his glaring

ring lights, like a rising Sun, ushered out from his chamber with his friends.

After Marriage the Jew had one year allowed him to live at home, he was ever afterwards liable to be summoned to the field, to repair to the place of general rendezvous, and bring a month's Provision with him; every Tribe was a little Commonwealth within itself, and the whole People of Israel, may be looked upon, as a body of Militia, trained up in War, and in time of Peace, employed in Agriculture.

After it became a Monarchy, the King usually was his own General, headed his Army, and his first Officer was styled, his Commander in Chief, then the Princes or Chiefs of the Tribes, Captains of thousands, Captains of hundreds, of fifties, of tens and of threes, and the Muster-masters were called Scribes.

Moses had trained up his People to Arms, but it was intended only to put
them

them in possession of peace and enjoyment, when, after the division of the Lands, every one was directed to farm his own Estate, prune his own Vine and plough his field. The reward held out to the Jew was a quiet life, a peaceful sitting under his Vine and his Fig-tree, neither gold, nor silver, nor stately houses were promised him, but the former and the latter rain, plentiful seasons, corn, wine and oil, increase of Cattle, and a multitude of Children.

All Spectacles, Places of diversion, and Theatrical representations were forbid the Jew, and every species of Gaming. No gain was lawful that depended on chance. Their Convocations and solemn Festivals were their grand amusement, such were frequently occurring, and most magnificently kept; at these Feasts, besides eating and drinking, the bands of Jewish Music elegantly played, and the voices all struck

up harmonious, and detached parties were leading the dance in high festivity and joy.

A Vintage Feast, Harvest and Sheep-shearing Feasts, were perpetually in family rotation. Except on these seasons of merriment and hospitality, the ordinary diet of the Jew, was simple and plain. Pulse a (sort of Potatoc), parched corn, bread dipped in vinegar, raisins, figs, milk, honey and some flesh, the first and most dainty treat, was a fatted calf.

The High-Priest was the Title nearest allied to royalty; Splendid Titles were unknown among them, Recorder, Treasurer, Counsellor, Judge, General-Officers, but the more usual were Chiefs and Elders and Scribes.

The Prophets and Prophetesses were venerated, almost all of them God-like and most exalted characters, looked up to, as the
established

established Oracles of their Country, awful and highly important Messengers, and consulted on all emergencies.

Seasons of mourning, were expressive of real grief, and sore distress. They began with tearing their cloaths to pieces, uncovering their heads, smiting their breasts, plucking off their hair, putting ashes on their heads, walking bare-foot, wearing sack-cloth next the skin, and lying on the bare ground. Immediately on a person's death, all his relations in this mournful plight repaired to the house, sat themselves down on the ground in profound silence, nothing was heard but sighs, and a funeral ditty, piped on some instrument by the Undertaker and his Men. They had witnessed the Ceremony of Embalmment in Egypt, and it was practised among the rich, but a poor man's body was only washed. The Mourners never left the house, until the corpse was buried, and
whatever

whatever they eat or drank, was brought them on the ground.

To this tedious detail of Jewish Customs, permit me to add a short account of their Trade, although until the reign of Solomon, they never seem to have set a high value on Merchandize.

The HEBREWS had long been eyewitnesses to its many advantages. By the Red Sea the Egyptians carried on a large traffick to all the known parts of the East, and when the Israelites were settled in Canaan, they had an opportunity of viewing the Sea trade of the Phœnicians, and the immense treasures they acquired. Some of the Tribes, Zebulon in particular, extended on the West, even to the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and almost to the very gates of Sidon; they must therefore have noticed the inhabitants of that great City, so famous for its navigation, bring
home

home from time to time, their riches, and most likely would be tempted to take a part with them. Joppa served as a Port to Judæa and Jerusalein, and Solomon made use of it to import the materials for his buildings; for this wise Prince, sent to King Hiram, for a number of his most skilful workmen in metals, stone and wood, Founders, Masons, Carvers and Architects, and then raised a Levy of thirty thousand Israelites no doubt to be instructed by them, for the curious part of all the work was wrought on the Plains of Jordan.

At that time all the Oriental Coast of Africa went under the general name of Ophir, and all the Western Coast of Africa and Spain was then called Tarshish, but we do not hear of the HEBREWS having much distant Commerce by Sea before the Navigation regularly carried on in the reign of Solomon. There were then two Fleets, one sailed from Tyre under the inspection
of

of King Hiram, in which Solomon had a share, and the other was more directly fitted out by the Israelites.

These Fleets sailed through the straits of Gibraltar quite to Guinea.

Solomon carried on a Traffick with the Spice Merchants in Arabia and the South, and another profitable Merchandize with the inhabitants in the North, and he traded largely to Egypt for Linens, Yarns, Horses and Carriages.

Although the Jewish Territories were so small, the HEBREWS so very numerous, and their Sabbatic year deprived them of the produce of one year in seven, yet they exported great quantities of Corn, Oil, Honey, Wine, and Fruits to Tyre and other Countries

The Nations who were tributary to them, paid their tribute in such Commodities, as their Country abounded with, either for
food

food or raiment, and the annual Tribute to Israel, from Mesha King of Moab was, one hundred thousand Lambs, and as many Rams with their wool.

The Additions are large to the Historical Parts, as in our Bibles, enough is not told of the reigns of some of the Jewish Kings, to interest you in their Story, for the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah and Israel, so often referred to, is lost. A very humble attempt is made to separate their Reigns, occasioning much repetition, and sometimes (it must be allowed) obscuring the Period. Their characters, here enlarged, are held up for imitation, or portraits of Vice and Deformity.

The Israelitish History, as conveyed down to us in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, finishes with the Book of Esther, in a very concise and most superficial manner, it is here carried on to

Vol. I. d the

the death of Herod, introductory to the Birth of Our Saviour, soon after whose Death, God chose to punish the Jews by putting an end to their Polity, a total destruction of their City, and extinction to their Empire.

Some parts of these Essays, pointed out to the Young, in the new and wise institutions of Sunday Schools, might prove of advantage to them. The Season of Youth, is a Season of discipline, lively, sincere, modest and respectful. Unprejudiced, and unrobbed of its innocence, the Mind is open and disposed to conviction, warmly glows with events and the interests of others, and when once you have fixed their attention, they are all on the listen to improve.

My first view in writing them centred at home, and I feel much depressed at their appearance abroad. Unequal are all my powers

powers and endeavours to describe this once happy Country, long desolate and forlorn, its ancient manners, usages, and laws, a People once so highly favoured, Revolutions brought about by Infinite Wisdom, and executed by Almighty Power.

I survey the attempt with the profoundest reverence, self-abasement, and anxiety.

My day of life far spent, and nothing, to me, of importance left, but how to close the scene with honour and usefulness. My reward already received. I am offering my Mite (all I have to give) to encourage the Reading of the Holy Scriptures.

My Young Friends, search for yourselves, there is a blessing annexed to your labour.

The History, is in part wrote, by a Faithful Historian, the Israelitish Lawgiver, graced with the Wisdom of the Statesman, the Elegance and sweetness of

the Poet, and Authors have attested,
that,

“ There is nothing so sweet, so tender and
“ pathetic, and at the same time nothing
“ so grand, so Majestic, so terrible, and so
“ harmonious, as the Poetic parts of the
“ Old Testament.”

What will endear to you the memory of
this first Jewish Prince, This Illustrious
Chief, is his exemplary Piety, that striking
feature, by which alone (at a time when
Courage and Conduct stood him in no
stead) he so often rescued his People from
Destruction, inspired them with Glory,
and led them on to Conquest and Empire.

Permit me to conclude by reminding my
Reader of the very wonderful Patronage,
still visibly upholding the Israelite. After
the ravage of Pestilence, Earthquake, and
Famine, of Wars, Massacres, and Perse-
cutions, the Dispersed and Vanquished
Jew (looking to a once-more happy union)
are,

are, to the number of three million, by the Providence of God yet signally preserved, Strangers no where, Trafficking every where, the Money-holders and Brokers of a World. Thus the Jew exists, distinct, unmixed, surviving all his Conquerors, enacting no one law, electing no Magistrate, enjoying no where the full exercise of his religion, incorporated with no one Nation Kingdom or Empire, yet guarded, and licensed, and admitted amongst them all.



POST-SCRIPT.

P O S T S C R I P T.

***F**RANKLY to confess, that in the most unreserved manner, I have availed myself of such sources of Information as my Situation afforded me, that I have freely borrowed from Books, and diligently sought materials for my Essays from Authors, publick Lectures, and Conversation.*

The Indulgence of my Friends with earnestness I solicit, their Kindness I most gratefully acknowledge.

While I have held up to view some Characters highly glorious and exemplary, it has been my fate to introduce others, which seem only to have been written in blood.

The Book is designed for the Young, the attention of the serious hopeful Youth the prize ambitiously

ously contended for. To engage him in pursuits rational and delightful—Give him a present pleasure—ensure him a still greater reward in future—and a peace and joy which no other Retrospect could ever yield him. Thus, and Thus only, is he thrice blessed, and progressively to advance through endless Ages of Divine Improvement, Self-approbation, and Happiness.

As yet unprejudiced, the Young may with candour accept an arrangement of Ancient History methodised for their perusal, and [the attempt (however humble) to point out many Beauties they perhaps may have forgot. 'Tis surely an ample field for Emulation, and it would give me real pleasure to rescue, from obscurity any one of the Elegancies of Sacred History yet unnoticed, and invite them to assist me in pursuing the enquiry.

“ FULL many a Gem of purest ray serene,
 “ The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear ;
 “ FULL many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 “ And waste its sweetness in the desert air.

GRAY.



E S S A Y I.

O N

J U D Æ A.

THE ISRAELITES were separated from amidst an Idolatrous World, to preserve the knowledge of the One supreme God, the Father of All, and the purity of his Worship, while all the Nations around them were *Idolaters*.

The *Jewish Territories* altho' of very small Extent, and hid in Solitary obscurity, unnoticed by Authors who describe the Kingdoms, and all the powerful States around them, yet claim a patient & distinguished examination from the multiplicity, Variety, and Extraordinary Transactions authentically recorded and highly interesting.

B

The

The Choice allotted them to be God's peculiar People——*Jehovah* was their Judge, Lawgiver, & King——With a high Hand and a stretched out Arm, Their Deliverer from Egyptian Bondage——A Zigzag journey, and of forty years, when the distance was so short from Egypt to Canaan——Awful strange, and many wonderful Events tending to rectify their errors, divest them of prejudice, and educate them for the high honours He intended them——the astonishing Proof of His Patronage and Power, by laying bare His Arm, making a Passage for them through the Red Sea, all on foot to the Wilderness of Etham——His feeding in the Desert this immense Multitude day by day——The visible appearance of Glory filling the tent where the Ark of God was deposited, regulating their March, a Cloud by day, a Pillar of fire by night : when this Cloud majestically rose and stood over the Tent, *Israel's* standing orders were to move forwards under their Divine Protector——The awful and tremendous Voice of God, pronouncing the Law from *Mount Sinai*, All the People trembled, the Mountain smoked, the Earth shook, and the smoke ascended, and a loud Trumpet sounded.—His Rules of War—a miraculous conquest of a Country, populous, warlike, and strongly fortified by Nature and Art.—A wonderful Revolution, an entire new Government,
its

its Polity, distinguished advantages, Laws civil and religious, curious, instructive and interesting.

The Scene of all this Glory was JUDÆA.

THIS once happy and highly favoured Spot was first peopled by Canaan, Grandson of Noah, and for more than 400 years called the Land of Promise 'till the promise was performed, & afterwards 'twas called *Judah*, and *Israel*, as consisting of these two Kingdoms.—JUDÆA, that being the most powerful Tribe.—PALESTINE, from the *Philistines* its inhabitants.—And the Holy Land, from being the Scene of our SAVIOUR's Passion, Humiliation, and Sufferings.

It is situated in *Asia Minor*, on both sides the River Jordan, bounded on the West by the Mediterranean Sea,—Syria, and Phœnicia, on the North—Arabia Deserta on the East, Arabia Petrea on the South, and was intended to take in all that Tract of Country from the Ocean to the river Euphrates. The Wilderness was its Limits to the South.—Lebanon North.—The River Euphrates East—and the Ocean to the West. Between all these "Every place whereon the

Soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours"
 —thus ran the original Edict.

The Country is Mountainous, but beautifully faced with Vale and rising Ground, cloathed with the Orange and the Citron grove, with Vineyards intersected with Lawn, and Arable in luxuriant crops, and more than once a year. The bud, the blossom, and the ripe fruit, on the same tree exhibit a variety of beauty. It abounds with the fragrant Balm of Gilead and Apples of Paradise by hundreds in a cluster. Honey ran down in plenty from the Trees, and even from the Rocks, the industrious Bee hiving every where. Cotton—Hemp—Flax—and Sugar Canes all grew in great profusion, hill and vale were in perpetual verdure,—the rising grounds wooded with the sweet Cypress, Palm-trees, and the stately Cedar—the River Jordan overflowed its banks, luxuriantly fertilizing all the plain. Sea-breezes, and refreshing Springs, in rivulets, and streams invigorated and beautified a very principal part of this once happy Country. One Acre seemed heaped upon another, increasing its matchless fertility. The Prophet *Ezekiel* calls it the glory of all lands, flowing with milk and honey.

It far exceeded in fruitfulness the celebrated land of *Egypt*, lying under the fourth and fifth Climates, and its longest day was fourteen hours and a quarter—its extent two hundred Miles in length, and not more than four-score in breadth. A Soil so luxuriant Moses also describes as flowing with Milk and Honey—A land of brooks and waters, of wheat and barley, of Vines, Figs, Pomegranates, and Oil, and the Vintage was twice and thrice a year, its bowels were Mines of iron, and brass, and its surface rich in pasturage for numerous Flocks and Herds of Cattle great and small.

Fish were caught in the greatest abundance and variety, and a principal Gate of the City Jerusalem, was called the fish-gate.

An adjacent Lake supplied them with immense quantities of Salt, esteemed of a most excellent quality.

Sacred History furnishes you with proofs, which astonish you, of the richness and fertility of the Soil, and the bill of fare of one Day's consumption in the Palace, is a glowing picture of Plenty and hospitality,

729 Bushels of Wheat.

30 Oxen.

100 Sheep with a proportionable

quantity of Venison—Poultry—Fish and Vegetables.

The daily religious Ceremonies in the Temple, and elsewhere, consumed much more Cattle, and the Sacrifice offered up at the solemn and magnificent dedication of it, was

Two and twenty thousand Oxen,

One hundred and twenty thousand Sheep.

The fruitfulness of the promised Land is accounted for, from “ the Serene temperature of the Air, under the North-temperate Zone,” the regularity of its Seasons, “ the constant fruitful showers of November and April, called the former and the latter Rain, “ The natural richness and fatness of its Soil, requiring no Dung nor Manure, and very little plowing,” The overflowing of the River Jordan, annually, soon after Easter, about the time of the early harvest,” from the encouragement given to husbandry, every inch of Land was improved, the barren places yielded something, Rocky ground, covered with Mould, produced

produced corn, pulse, and pasture, the blessing and influence of heaven was every where experienced.

J U D Æ A was divided into Maratime and inland, into the mountainous or hilly Country, and Champain and Valley, and as the River Jordan ran across it, into Judæa on this side, and beyond Jordan—but a more considerable one, was, into twelve Cantons and divided by lot among the twelve Tribes, of which ten and a half were seated on one side the River, and only two and a half on the other. In the reign of Solomon it was divided a little differently, and called the twelve Provinces or Districts, from each of which, an Officer or Steward was, by rotation deputed monthly to supply the Kings-household with Provisions, each out of his own district. A more fatal Division was made after Solomon's Death, ten tribes revolted under Jeroboam, who assumed the title of King of Israel, two Tribes only remained with Reoboam, Son of King Solomon, and he was afterwards stiled King of Judah.

In this District once flourished the celebrated City of Jerusalem, divided into four parts, and each was enclosed in its own Walls.

The Old City on Mount Zion, contained a superb Castle and the Palace of David—The
Lower

Lower City on the side of the same hill, called the Daughter of Zion, contained two Magnificent Palaces built by Solomon for himself and his Queen the Daughter of Pharoah, and a third for the Princes and household, and also a stately Amphitheatre, capable of containing Eighty thousand Spectators, and two immensely strong Fortifications which were called CITADELS.—The third City was called the new City, inhabited by Tradesmen, Artificers and Merchants—The fourth stood on Mount Moriah, and was dignified with the most magnificent Temple, the Ornament and Glory of a World, immense, of polished Marble, eighty two yards high, and its celebrated Tower, twelve hundred feet.

Under the visible Displeasure of the *Almighty*, and the Turkish Yoke, a sad and dismal Change is now experienced in J U D Æ A, by far the greatest part is reduced to a mere Desert, of its numerous Inhabitants, Millions were slain under Titus, thousands and ten thousands destroyed by Famine and Pestilence, and the remainder sold, and dispersed into almost every Clime and Country: and of so small estimation were they, that the price of four Jews, was only a bushel of barley. A Sangiac, the present Governor resides in a house, said to have been Pontius Pilate's, the
Churches

Churches are Mahometan Mosques, and all the trade of this once flourishing and highly favoured City, is beads, reliëts, and provision for Travellers.

The City reduced to a poor thinly inhabited Town, on a rocky mountain; the Soil stoney, sandy, and barren.

A short lived change (and one we read of with astonishment) this City experienced under the Emperor Adrian, after Titus had plundered, burnt, and demolished it. The Emperor built a City on its Ruins, and erected a statue of Jupiter over the place of the Resurrection, a Venus on Mount Calvary, and an Adonis at Bethlehem; and these all continued till the Emperor Constantine, and his mother Helena, a British lady, pulled them down, and erected in their stead magnificent Churches, now remaining; but the Turks are the masters, and keep the keys in their possession.

New Colonies from distant countries re-peopled Judæa.

Inundations of Northern Barbarians, and the blind zeal of Christians encountering with

Mahometans, have completed the sad and total devastation of it. Herds of wild Arabs, living altogether on plunder and depredation, seize on all and every thing they meet. The dread and horror of Travellers, inquisitively viewing so distinguished a spot; and its once famous cities, villages, and towns, now most dangerous to resort to, and most comfortless to live in.

Of all the other Tribes their very name is lost, and their memory swallowed up in the neighbouring kingdoms, whose Princes divided the land, and added it each to his own territories.

ESSAY

E S S A Y II.

On the Life of the Patriarch

A B R A H A M.

A B R A H A M, the faithful servant, and the friend of God, was the Son of Terah, a lineal descendant of *Noah*.

A B R A H A M was born in Ur, a city of Chaldea, 2097 Years before CHRIST, and 1072 after the Flood.

In the very ancient Statutes of Chaldea it is recorded, " Abraham was a righteous and emi-

“ nent man, well skilled in celestial Science, and
“ a teacher of Astronomy.”

By others he has been called a Royal Shepherd ;
and this highly distinguished Character, and venerable Patriarch, was the Father and the Founder of the Jewish Empire.

The sacred Historian is entirely silent as to the early part of his life. He first introduces him at the age of seventy-four, but fills up all the remaining Period with a minute and most entertaining succession of domestic Anecdotes divinely instructive and exemplary.

The first thing told of Abraham is his filial Piety and dutiful attendance on his aged parent ; who now, at the advanced period of two hundred and five years, removed with all his family and flocks from Chaldea to Haran, a city in Mesopotamia, and the year following died in that country.

It was soon after Abraham had paid his last due honours to his Father, and attended on his funeral, that God commanded him to leave his patrimonial estate, and native home, to sojourn all his life, a pilgrim, in a strange and distant country, to which
God

God had directed him. And *Moses*, his historian, gives a long and interesting account of his life, travels, trials, and the very wonderful means by which divine Wisdom and Goodness led him by the hand through all, by signal and most glorious promises, present blessings, extraordinary interpositions, deliverances, and support.

Among many, there was one promise which highly animated and encouraged Abraham :

“ In his offspring all the Nations of the whole earth should be blessed.”

And yet the promise was made under very apparent singular discouragements, which occasioned him to be more thoughtful, and much less expecting the blessing.

ABRAHAM however instantly pursued the orders which were given him ; he collected all his herds, and his flocks, and packed up his furniture, household goods, and treasures ; he set out on his journey, with his beautiful wife, his servants, and his cattle, from Haran, his family residence, and travelled through Mesopotamia to the land of the Canaanites ; and there, near a populous city, named Sichem, pitched his tents,
and

and settled his family abode. Instantly on his arrival, he fell prostrate on the ground, with piety and true devotion he worshipped God, and built an altar for sacrifice and thanksgiving.

GOD here soon appeared again to *Abraham*, and confirmed all his former promises, assuring him of his protection and support. And God said,

“ Cast now thine eyes all round the horizon,
“ all you there behold shall be given to your posterity.”

At this time, a famine in the land of Canaan occasioned *Abraham's* removal into Egypt, a country affording a plentiful supply for the wants of his family and very numerous flocks. The blessing of GOD accompanied *Abraham* there; his cattle greatly increased, the Egyptian Prince loaded him with presents, his herds and his riches are multiplied; but here a new trial, a misunderstanding of the Prince, and a domestic alarm, produced a new and signal interposition, and a fresh convinced *Abraham* of the ever watchful care and protection of his GOD.

Pharoah,

Pharoah struck with the highly pleasing person of *Sarah*, and being told she was his sister, and not *Abraham's* wife, indulged his affections, and made overtures to *Sarah*; who, though at the age of sixty-five, was so exquisitely beautiful as to endanger the life of any one who passed for her husband——Beauty like her's charmed the Egyptians, and captivated Pharaoh.——

The Prince's message occasioned an explanation. Pharaoh was sorely and distressingly disappointed, and the King ordered *Abraham* to keep all his rich presents, but to leave the country, return with his numerous herds, his very beautiful wife, and his servants to Bethel, where he was now informed the famine had entirely ceased. *Abraham* obeyed, and instantly on his arrival devoutly worshipped God, offering upon his own altar a grateful sacrifice, recognized afresh God's many blessings, and this his last and signal deliverance.

Sarah, despairing of bearing herself a child, according to the custom of that age and country, promoted a connection between her husband and Hagar, who was her hand-maid; resolving, rather

ther than not at all, even by proxy, to be a mother.

Hagar, on finding herself pregnant, grew haughty, behaved with insolence, and insulted her mistress. Upon *Sarah's* remonstrance, Hagar was treated with such severity, that she chose rather to leave her service, and she privately left the family, and stole away from her mistress.

Hagar took the road towards Egypt, and set herself down by the side of a well near the Town of Sur. In this solitary situation, an angel appeared to Hagar, and reminded her of the propriety of turning back, making a dutiful submission to her mistress, and acknowledging her fault; and the Angel told her, by way of encouragement, she should soon be delivered of a son, and he ordered her to name him *Ishmael*. Her son should be valiant and warlike, the father of a mighty nation, but his hands should be against every man, and every man's hand against him. Upon this comfortable good news, Hagar was determined to go home, and it was not very long after that she was brought to bed of a Son; and as she had been directed, Hagar named him *Ishmael*. Several tribes of wild Arabs, who lived in tents, and

and became very numerous, were the offspring of *Ishmael*; and, as the Angel had foretold, they were fierce, warlike, and lived much upon Rapine.

ABRAHAM, not expecting now another child, at first brought up *Ishmael* as his heir, and the heir of the promises. Hagar, hoping it might tend to the advantage of her son, carefully concealed all the Angel had told her; and it was thirteen years after when God revealed to *Abraham* his further intentions, and promised him a son by *Sarah* his wife.

Soon after *Abraham's* return, God was pleased again to notice him, and renewed all the promises He had made him :

“ All the land he saw should infallibly be given
“ to his posterity ;”

for that very end He had brought him thither out of Chaldea; and further, to encourage *Abraham*, God now revealed to him the outlines of all the principal events which should befall his family for the space of four hundred years; after which period, his posterity having long sojourned and been in bondage in a strange land, God would, at that time,

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punish

punish their Oppressors, and give to them the land he now inhabited, from the boundaries of the Nile, which ran through Egypt, to the river, the great river Euphrates, which divided Canaan from Syria; but he himself, in a good old age, should first be gathered in peace to his fathers, and peace and plenty smile throughout all his habitations.

Lot, a Nephew of *Abraham's*, from the first agreed to accompany his Uncle, and had set out with him from Haran: they had now long lived together, and the flocks and herds of both had so greatly increased, that, for the convenience of pasturage, the Uncle and the Nephew had consented to part. At this time, from the mixture of the two families some differences and disputes had arose which tended to hasten the separation. *Abraham* said, "I pray thee, let there be no strife between thee and me, and thy herdsmen and mine," assigning the tenderest reason, "for we are brethren"—And *Abraham* offered Lot the choice of place, "If thou wilt take the left hand I will take the right—be it Nephew as thou wilt, and God bless thee whithersoever thou goest."

ABRA-

ABRAHAM now removed his tents, and his flocks and his household ; leaving Bethel, he went and dwelt in the land of Moreh, near Hebron, at that time the capital city of Judæa.

ABRAHAM here built an altar to the Lord ; and being rich and powerful, he commenced a friendship with the chiefs and most opulent in his neighbourhood, and by such wise and respectable alliances he continued peaceably to live amongst them ten years.

It was while he resided near Hebron, that Melchisedec, a royal priest, surnamed the Just King, came to his tent and blessed him, and *Abraham* presented him with the tenth part of the spoils he had lately taken from Chedor-lamomer, a neighbouring prince, who had molested and seized upon the property of his Nephew Lot and imprisoned his person——*Abraham*, with his own servants, and the numerous servants of his friends, assembled in a body, and formed a little army of three hundred, and they set out in a party, rescued Lot with his cattle and all his treasures, and what they had taken from him. This is the very first account we read of respecting Tythes.

ABRAHAM removed after this to the fruitful vale of Mamre, and under a famous Oak, ever after held in high veneration, the Patriarch pitched his tent, and continued in this valley, about fifteen miles from Hebron.

GOD was pleased once more to appear to *Abraham* in this his new habitation; and, in a vision, He confirmed anew the promises he had made him, assuring Abraham,

“ He would be his exceeding great reward.”

As he was still childless, Abraham presumed to name his doubts, and ventured to expostulate with GOD; he could not comprehend how the promises respecting his posterity could be fulfilled, and it was now told him he should have a son and heir. And GOD said,

“ Lift now up thine eyes to heaven, behold I
“ will make thy posterity more numerous than the
“ stars thereof.”

ABRAHAM could not forbear asking a token whereby he might be assured of so distinguished a blessing; and GOD ordered him to pick out
from

from his flocks, an heifer, a goat, and a ram, all of them were to be of three years old, and also a pigeon and a turtle dove, to prepare them all for sacrifice, and lay them on the altar.

ABRAHAM obeyed, he killed the beasts and the birds, divided them in pieces, he first placed the beasts, and over them the birds, and set them in separate heaps, and while he stood watching them, and keeping off the flies (in that warm country), just at sun-set, a deep sleep fell upon him, and a horror, and intense darkness accompanied it—God again revealed the principal events about to happen; after which Abraham awoke and saw a smoking furnace, and a bright burning lamp passing between the victims and consuming them—highly delighted at this token of the presence of his God, Abraham ran immediately to his beloved wife, imparting this glorious new ratification and covenant God had thus graciously made him.

ABRAHAM having arrived to the age of ninety-nine, God commanded him now to change his name from Abram to Abraham, the latter signifying the Father of many nations; and God assured him, Kings should come out of his loins,
his

his posterity should be lords and owners of the land in which he was only a pilgrim and a stranger, his Representatives should possess the whole.

GOD now appointed the ceremony of circumcision, and commanded Abraham to circumcise all the males of his family, and henceforward God instituted that ordinance to be performed on every male child the eighth day after the birth.

ABRAHAM'S happiness is now completed, he is now expressly informed, *Sarah*, his beloved wife, should bring him the heir of all his future blessings, and Abraham was directed to call his name Isaac.

“ Within the following year *Sarah* should bear
“ him Isaac, and in his seed all the nations of the
“ whole earth should be blessed.—

Overpowered by the glorious tidings, Abraham lay prostrate on the ground, devoutly worshipping and gratefully praising God.

As soon as he arose he set about performing this last and new injunction; and Abraham circumcised himself.

himself, his son Ishmael, and all the males in his family.

ABRAHAM still dwelt in the vale of Mamre, and as he was sitting one day at the door of his tent, under the venerable oak, he saw afar off three men whom he took to be strangers. Abraham instantly arose and walked forwards to meet them, bowing low he respectfully saluted them, and invited them in. One of the three was eminently conspicuous from the other two, and Abraham addressed him as chief,

“My Lord, (says he) pass not, I pray you,
“away from thy servant—let a little water be
“brought to wash your feet, and rest under the
“tree—I will fetch a morsel of bread, after eat-
“ing which ye shall pass on—and they conde-
“scendingly said, so do.”

ABRAHAM immediately ordered on the table the best provisions of his house, he killed the fattest calf, the highest delicacy of the country, and courteously and most hospitably entertained his guests.

’Twas while they sat at dinner one of the
three spake of the honours about to be conferred

on Sarah, " within a year Sarah should be a joyful mother, and bear him a son. With a discourse so interesting Sarah's curiosity was very naturally excited, and she stood listening at the door of the tent; her feelings were so overpowered by what she had heard, it was impossible to command herself, she fell into a loud laugh, and the guests left the table and ran to enquire what could be the cause. Confused, and quite ashamed, Sarah used every means to stifle it, she would fain have excused it, fain would deny it, all was totally out of her power—the serious and striking enquiry affrighted her still more—abashed at the discovery she stood expecting a rebuke both from her husband and his guests; a very gentle one indeed was all that now passed, one of the three gravely and mildly suggested to Sarah,

" That nothing was impossible with God."

In this very hospitable reception of his guests, how very conspicuous is the humility of the Patriarch, he offers so little, and he gives so much.

Of these three angels one had been sent purposely to notify the birth of a son to Abraham,
but

but the other two were commissioned to execute the sad sentence on two once famous cities in the vale of Siddim.

In the afternoon the guests took their leave in order to pursue their journey, and Abraham courteously accompanied them, and set them on their way—a very usual civility then. Afterwards, as they passed along, one of them confidentially revealed to him a secret and very awful judgment. God (he said) had commissioned him to go to the populous city of Sodom on a most tremendous errand; the cries of Sodom and Gomorrah were gone up to Heaven, and his orders were, utterly to destroy both cities, and all their inhabitants, kings and nobles and people.

ABRAHAM stood agast at what he heard, struck with the deepest horror and consternation, and full of compassion and sympathy.

ABRAHAM, with true piety, and most devout earnestness pleaded for Sodom, and never ceased his entreaties till he had gained a promise,

“That in case there should be found ten righteous men in Sodom, God would for their sakes spare the city.”

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There is a winning modesty and reverential awe in his very pathetic and most eloquent pleadings with God; and the forbearance and mercy of God are beautifully illustrated in his condescending answers.

ABRAHAM had only the satisfaction of preserving his Nephew Lot and his family, to whom the secret and visitation were revealed, and they were all of them first led out of the city by the destroying Angel himself.

The following morning Abraham, from the place where he had stood before the Lord, saw the black smoke and sulphureous flames ascending as from a furnace——

“ The Lord had rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire.”

He overthrew both cities and their numerous inhabitants with a tremendous earthquake, thunderings, lightning, and liquid fire.

ABRAHAM had lived sixteen years on the plains of Mamre, and was now looking out a new situation for himself, his herds, and his flocks. The stench and fumes arising from the vale of Siddim hastened

hastened his removal, and he went and dwelt in the land of the Philistines, between Kadesh and Shur, near Gerar.

ABRAHAM, perhaps too fearful and overcautious, thought it necessary here again to practise that same deceit he had before practised in the court of Pharaoh:

“ And he said of Sarah, she is my sister.”

Gerar was a capital city, and Abimelech, that amiable Prince, kept his court there,

Sarah's exquisite beauty charmed the inhabitants, and captivated the King. Abimelech sent for Sarah, but before she was introduced to him, he was informed by a vision that she was Abraham's wife.

Upon this the King ordered her to be restored to her husband, and reproved Abraham's timidity and want of confidence in the honour and virtue of his court. Abraham's reply was a frank confession of the truth; he feared, to obtain Sarah, they would deprive him of his life,

Abimelech, satisfied with what he heard, and happy to have escaped the snare he had been so near falling into, said to Abraham,

“ Behold, my land is before you, dwell where it pleaseth thee.”

And he presented him with sheep and oxen, men-servants and women-servants, and a thousand pieces of silver to purchase a rich veil, a beautiful covering, for his wife ; and addressing himself to Sarah, he said,

“ This I give thee as a part of your dress, suited to married life, and fit for your station and modesty.”

A polite acknowledgement of her enchanted beauty, and some compensation for an injury he once had intended her.

It was here, under such a friendly protection and good settlement, Sarah brought forth her long-wished-for son, and she called his name Isaac, which signifies laughter ; and, on the eighth day (as he had been directed) Abraham circumcised his son.

This

This seemed a truly pleasing and happy season of their lives ; Abraham and Sarah in the Zenith of their felicity ; Sarah suckled her child, and in due time weaned it ; on this joyful event, Abraham made a great feast, a general thanksgiving, and high conviviality throughout all his household.

Now follows the history of the most awful trial of Faith and Obedience ever exhibited :

A human sacrifice required, and the fondest and most affectionate father commanded to slay and to offer up his child upon the altar. How the order was conveyed we are not told ; God has a vast variety of ways of communicating what knowledge he pleases.

This was no instant offering under the impressions of a vision or threat ; time is allowed for reflection ; for parental feelings to grow stronger ; for the tenderest yearnings of nature ; the pleadings of love and innocence. The sentence itself is a beautiful gradual rise of the passions, higher and higher.

“ Take now thy son, thine only son, thy son
 “ Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the
 “ land

“ land of Moriah, and offer him there, for a
 “ burnt offering, upon one of the mountains
 “ which I shall tell thee.”

A command consisting of every thing terrible to a parent ; what do we not feel for the innocence of the youth ? and what for the consciousness of the father ? Yet Abraham at once resolves ; makes no delay ; rises up, immediately at day-break, with serenity and wonderful composure ; prepares for his journey ; saddles his ass ; orders two servants to attend them ; and having called up Isaac, and cleft the wood, they all set out together from Beer-sheba to Mount Moriah. A little before he came to the foot of the mountain he directed his two servants to stop, and wait his return.

ABRAHAM and his son ascend the hill ; the former carrying the fire and the knife, and Isaac bearing the wood. Being arrived at the destined spot, in amiable simplicity, Isaac enquired for the victim—

“ Behold, father, the fire and the wood, where
 “ is the lamb ?”

ABRA-

ABRAHAM composedly told him, God would provide one for himself. The mighty secret burns in his anxious breast, and now comes the time when all must be revealed : his beloved son, now no child, probably about five and twenty, unconscious of his situation, his consent became necessary, and must be obtained ; he could flee and escape, he could resist ; is he likely to submit to torture, to agony, to death ?

A most affecting discovery follows ; disarming the man, overwhelming the parent : it is told, and, on the part of Isaac, manfully, piously, and gracefully received :

“ It were enough for me that my earthly parent, alone, called me to the altar, how much more when my heavenly Father redemands his own.”

Isaac submits to be tied, to be bound, to be laid on the pile of wood, the father's hand is uplifted—and the knife.

Intentions are acts ; the sacrifice is offered, the voice of God now burst forth :

“ Lay:

“ Lay not thy hand on the lad ; I know
“ thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not with-
“ held thy son, thine only son from me.”

With what ecstasy must it have been received.

God now condescended to renew all his pro-
mises and covenants with Abraham.

“ By myself have I sworn (saith the Lord) in
“ blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I
“ will multiply thy seed as the stars in the heaven,
“ and as the sand on the sea-shore.

“ All the nations of the earth shall be blessed
“ in thy seed, because thou hast obeyed my
“ voice.”

In a thicket close by him, caught by his horns,
Abraham saw a ram, which he took and immedi-
ately offered up as a burnt-offering.

Father and son cordially and most affectionately
embrace ; they descend from the mountain ; Isaac
lives ; Abraham's sacrifice is accepted, his faith
and obedience perfected.

On

On his preparing to return, the fond affectionate mother engages the Patriarch's first thoughts; Isaac, she is tenderly feeling our absence and foreboding mischief; haste, Isaac, thy mother will think we tarry. They descend the hill, rejoin the two servants they left in waiting, and all return back to Beer-sheba.

This very spot now chosen by God for the scene of this wonderful sacrifice, was afterwards distinguished as the seat of empire; for the superbest and most magnificent temple in the universe; and most of all by a sacrifice infinitely more important, and infinitely more valuable.

After this very interesting and highly animating scene, Abraham returned to his rural and domestic life, and enjoyed its many innocent and pleasurable endearments more than ever, till they were all distressfully interrupted by the death of Sarah, his beloved wife, she had now attained to her one hundred and twenty-seventh Year.

The earlier part of her life had been chequered with many mortifications: the long unaccomplished wish of bearing a son; the unsettled hard-

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ships

ships of a life of pilgrimage; and some stings and torments from jealousy, even almost to the age of ninety; but she had enjoyed, during the last thirty-seven years, a delightful calm, cheered and cherished by the unabated affection of Abraham, and the amiable and distinguished accomplishments and piety of her son, the joy of his parents and the favourite of his God.

A companion so fair, amiable, and lovely, Abraham bewailed and most tenderly loved; a friendship of very long standing, and cemented at last by the dearest of all pledges. He very feelingly laments his loss.

ABRAHAM was still a pilgrim, wandering without any settled habitation, tender, affectionate, and sorrowful, at the age of one hundred and thirty seven; he is considering how he shall honour her remains, procure it a residence of safety, and make it his own.

It was in those days thought ignominious for any person to bury in a sepulchre belonging to another. Abraham therefore went to the gate of Hebron, the high Court of Judicature, where the elders, magistrates, and nobles met to administer justice,

justice, settle property and the publick business of the state.

He there introduced himself, and being permitted to speak, he made them an offer for a piece of land, a purchase of a field for a burial place, and he addressed himself to the sons of Heth, the most considerable family at Hebron.

On Abraham's proposal, all the elders and judges stood up, and they freely offered him a choice of every sepulchre throughout the country.

Every elder made an offer of his own, what they themselves had built for their own use and their families.

"Hear us, my Lord, thou art a mighty prince, in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead, there is none of us all shall withhold from thee his sepulchre."

In such high veneration was the character and respectability of the Patriarch.

ABRAHAM felt all their kindness, he gratefully thanked them, but begged that he might be per-

mitted to buy the cave of Mac-pelah from Ephron the Hittite.

Ephron came forwards and made him a free offer of the field and the cave.

“ My Lord, the field give I thee, and the cave
“ that is therein I give it thee.”

ABRAHAM persisted in buying it, and paying down the utmost value, and on Ephron's naming four hundred shekels of silver, about sixty pounds, Abraham cut it him off, and paid it down in court in full weight.

This is probably the very first conveyance ever made, and indeed the first money transaction we read of.

ABRAHAM took his leave of the court, brought with him his title-deed, took possession of the field, the timber upon it, and the cave; and he here deposited the dear remains of his beloved wife.

This was Abraham's first landed estate in Canaan, it commenced in a single field, and a cave for a burying-place.

Pensive

Pensive and mournful Abraham returned home, and employed his first thoughts how he should happily fettle his son.

Isaac had arrived to the age of forty, and his father's conscientious wish was, that he should take a wife from among his own kindred; Abraham now, therefore, held a conference with his son, and proposed to him a marriage with Rebekah, one of his nieces, a daughter of Milcah, the widow of his brother Nahor.

His son Isaac, affectionate and dutiful, was always fond of retirement, busily employed in domestic life, readily gave up the settlement of his affairs to his father, and even left him to form this very interesting and important connexion for life.

Both father and son placed the highest confidence in the fidelity of an ancient and very trusty servant.

ABRAHAM laid his plans, and determined to send to Haran in Mesopotamia, where many of his family yet lived. He consulted with this old and faithful servant, and bound him, by an oath,
to

to bring him a wife for his son Isaac out of his own family and kindred.

The servant laid his hand under Abraham's thigh (the ancient custom of taking an oath) and called God to witness the engagement he had thus solemnly made.

ABRAHAM invested him with full powers and authority even to conclude the marriage ; and he dispatched him with a princely and honourable train of ten camels, laden with the richest presents, a dowry for the damsel.

ABRAHAM's faithful servant made the best of his way to Haran, and before he entered the city, he saw the young women (as was usual in those days) coming out to draw water at the well, and Rebekah was one.

The history of this meeting is told with wonderful simplicity, and a happy coincidence of events.

Rebekah was pointed out to the servant; she was seen with her pitcher; the damsel was wondrous fair, in youthful bloom, and highly pleasing. He watched her as she went down to the well,
and

and while she filled her pitcher, struck with her elegant person, and overjoyed at hearing who she was, Abraham's faithful servant ran to meet her, and he said,

" Let me, I pray you, drink a little water out of your pitcher."

Intent on his errand, he was trying her temper and hospitality ; a stranger and a traveller, he pleads being weary and thirsty ; refresh me with a draught from your pitcher.

Rebekah courteously says,

" Drink, my Lord."

As soon as he returned the pitcher, she hastily set it down ; saying,

" And now also will I draw water for thy camels till they have all done drinking."

Thus witnessing the sweetness of her disposition and the friendliness of her heart, he ventured to enquire after her family,

" Whose fair daughter art thou ?"

She

She told him,

“ She was daughter of Bethuel, the son of
“ Milcah.”

“ Pray, have you room in your family to lodge
“ me, and can I fodder my beasts ?”

Persuading in her good humour, she told him ;

“ She had straw and provender enough for them
“ all.”

The servant, delighted, looked on a gold
earring, and put bracelets round her wrists ; and
on this she ran away home to tell of the stranger,
and name his request.

It was soon reported from whom he was come,
and the train he had brought. Her brother Laban
(at whose house she lived) ran out to meet him, to
enquire after his rich relations, and his message.

With hearty cordiality Laban invited him in,
ordered a table to be spread, good cheer and
refreshment for the traveller.

Abraham's

Abraham's faithful servant improved this moment of Laban's benevolence, and refused even to enter his house till he had named his errand; told of all the rich treasures of his master; the amiable accomplishments and very elegant person of Isaac; and unloaded the rich presents he had brought.

The brother could only reflect upon it as a blessing intended them by God; and asked, how he could refuse, seeing the matter was already determined by him.

But Laban's suggesting—brothers have no authority over the affections of the maid—on this ambiguity (though he seem'd only to have respect to his not hurrying her away) Abraham's servant instantly turned round to the virgin, and he presented her with earrings and bracelets, and jewels of gold and Jewels of silver, and then made a rich present to her mother, and Laban.

After which, leaving the damsel to admire her ornaments, and the family and her to discourse upon them and his message, he sat down to his meal, and left them together.

Some little time after, he resumed his request, named his return, and pressed her accompanying him.

Her mother and Laban pleaded much for her stay ; let the damsel abide a little longer, ten days at the least, and should she show no reluctance, then shall she go with thee to thy master and his son.

The trusty servant (well aware of human fickleness) would not cease his importunity and leave it undecided, he kept urging a compliance. This could not be done without the damsel, her consent became necessary, and calling her in, they put the question to be answered by her :

“ And Rebekah said, I will go.”

In consequence of which, attended by her nurse, she set off the next morning on her journey.

All the rest of the day was spent in high festivity and joy ; the neighbours around came with caresses and congratulations ; and amidst the affectionate embraces of her friends and relatives, and the tears and the joys of them all, Rebekah,
with

with her nurse and the servant, set out on their camels from Haran.

Isaac, not indifferent to so interesting an event, thoughtful and expecting them home, went out in a serious mood, and was walking up and down in the fields, thinking of all that was passing and much of his bride, spying the camels a coming, all in a flutter from impatience, he felt overcome by his thoughts and the nearness of the interview.

Rebekah was told who he was ; she alight from her camel ; with unaffected modesty (truly feminine) she covered herself over with a Veil, and stood still to receive his first salutations and compliments.

Isaac gracefully led her to the Tent that had always been his mother's, highly pleased with her beauty, her elegant person and her modesty.

ABRAHAM rejoiced on thus seeing his son now made so happy, and in possession of so charming, so agreeable a wife.

The Patriarch was now arrived to the age of one hundred and forty-one. The history informs us : Abraham still respectfully dwelling on the

happiness of wedded life, married Keturah, and by her Abraham had six sons.

He took the greatest care to portion out these children, so that they could not interfere with the inheritance of his son Isaac, and interrupt the quiet and peace of him and his family. He placed them in Arabia, Eastward of Beer-sheba and the land of Canaan, and Abraham had now also ten grand-children.

If you contrast Abraham with his son, the Father was distinguished by Firmness of mind, and Isaac by tenderness of heart, fitting him for more domestic Scenes. Abraham extorts from us Admiration, Isaac insinuates himself into our love : Splendid virtues require superior abilities ; but the milder graces of Isaac, as they need only a well-disposed heart, so they may be displayed at the family hearth. Setting aside ambition, the life of Isaac is a life of dignity and honour.

ABRAHAM, the good old man, content and calm under a review of the past ; a conscience finding nothing to reproach him ; his trust in God unabated ; Abraham's last hour was peace, and Isaac stood fondly weeping over him.

Thus

Thus this Venerable Illustrious Patriarch, Heir of a world, and the Friend of God, at the age of one hundred and seventy-five was gathered to his Fathers, and to her, with whom, when living, he had been so happily united.

A man of exemplary piety, and highly exalted virtues.

His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, with the most respectful solemnity, paid him the last dutiful and filial honours, and buried him in the cave of Mac-pelah, on the side of Sarah his beloved wife.

Uncommon were his trials, great and extraordinary were his blessings.

A life of distinguished Firmness, many excellent virtues, with the profoundest reverence for his God.

Against Hope, he believed in Hope, strong in Faith, fully satisfied what God had promised, He was also able to perform.

Unbounded

Unbounded was his confidence and reliance on Him, and it was rewarded with present blessings ; signal promises ; the most winning condescension ; and the highest national Honours to his Posterity.



ESSAY

E S S A Y III.

A Short Introductory Compendium to the

J E W I S H H I S T O R Y.

ADAM, introduced into a beautiful garden, rich and luxuriant, is directed to dress and preserve its cultivation and neatness.

He was to eat of its fruits, and drink of its pure springs, with one single prohibition, obviously expressive of his obedience and gratitude.

God reveals to Adam what relates to the creation, and to his own formation in particular.

Adam

Adam delivers it down to **SETH**, and Seth to **ENOC**H, Enoch to **METHUSALAH** his son, and so to **NOAH** ; and as Shem lived in Chaldea, he communicated it to **ABRAHAM** the Father and the Founder of the Jewish Nation.

The Longevity of man, in these early ages, contributed to render tradition the criterion of truth.

Although 2432 years had elapsed before the birth of Moses, our inspired historian, the channels of information were as yet uncorrupted. The History was very probably conveyed down from Adam to Moses by only seven persons *.

METHUSALAH, the grand-father of Noah, was 340 years old when Adam died, and he afterwards lived till the year of the Flood, when **NOAH** had attained to his six hundredth year, and died only two years before the birth of Abraham. **SETH**, being his neighbour, was very likely to communicate what he knew to **ABRAHAM**. **ISAAC** instructed his grand-son **JOSEPH** in the History of his predecessors ; and **AMRAM**, the father of Moses, was Contemporary with Joseph.

* Methusalah, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, and Amram.

These were the conveyances by which the History is preserved and handed down to us so faithfully in our Bibles.

On the first day of his Sovereignty and Dominion, Adam commanded all the Beasts and flying fowl, and every reptile to pay him homage, and as they passed before him, he gave to each its proper name, distinctly to characterize them to his posterity.

We have next related the formation of Eve, her marriage and introduction to Adam.

Besides the magnificent volume of Creation open to his view, Man had very signal intimations and assistances afforded him.

God delighted in Adam, and conversed with him as a Father and a Friend.

The lessons He taught him were, Gratitude, Love, Veneration, Awe, and Reverence. The homage of the heart, in simplicity and purity, in spirit and in truth.

Invested with Sovereignty, and in possession of a world, various Offices and Duties are allotted him.

H

A law

A law from within regulates his life, and visibly and powerfully checks him when he breaks it.

Six days are allowed him for employments, pleasures and recreation; the seventh is sacred, the Sabbath of his God.

Such the happy dispensation of innocence; but how soon it ended! What a sad exchange ensued from disobedience? Unruly passions strange and new, mutual upbraidings, tumult, shame, dread, remorse.

Knowing now that they were naked, *Guilt* sought a covering for itself and them, abash'd, debas'd, their own tormentors, they stood awaiting (amidst the thickest foliage) the presence and the anger of God, the sentence of death, and expulsion from paradise.

The second is a Dispensation of Grace, and it reached to the time of the Flood, and may be called the first tidings of the Gospel.

The seed of the woman should destroy the works of the Devil. The gracious plan of God for

for the Salvation of mankind by some mighty Saviour.

The third is the Noarchical, from Noah, the Preacher of righteousness, and is a repetition of this dispensation of Grace now made to Noah, the second Father of mankind.

Even in this very early period there were many bright discoveries respecting God, his providence, and a world to come, as the life and sufferings of Job, who lived under that dispensation, expressly inform us.

It was in the six hundredth year of Noah's life God extirpated the human race by a flood, Noah and his family excepted, he lived three hundred and fifty years after, in all nine hundred and fifty.

Towards the end of the second generation after this event, notwithstanding an interposition so extraordinary, the knowledge and worship of God became again obscured and corrupted by the grossest superstition and Idolatry ; and it pleased God, from among the nations, to chuse out the family of Abraham, a grand-son of his servant Noah, to be the Father and the Founder of the Jewish Empire, and commanded him to leave his

native home, and father's house at Haran in Mesopotamia, and travel into Canaan, a land overrun with Idolatry and iniquity, that he and his house might be a standing monument to God, to preserve religion and virtue, in opposition to the degeneracies of the nations around him.

God there revealed to Abraham his intentions respecting him and his posterity, for the space of four hundred years, at the end of which period they should quietly possess all the land of Canaan, even from the Nile to the great River, the River Euphrates.

A government thus commencing descended to his son Isaac, and to Jacob, and to his twelve Sons.

These formed a numerous people called Israelites, from Israel, the new name given to Jacob, and on this account.

An angel appeared one evening to Jacob at Mehanaim, and is said to have wrestled with him till the morning (a kind of spiritual wrestling) when Jacob with tears, intreaties, and supplications, prevailed upon the angel to bless him, upon which
he

he changed his name to Israel, which signifies a man that has prevailed with God.

Jacob's history informs us he was the younger brother, and by a stratagem of his Mother's, obtained the blessing intended for Esau the elder.

Rebekah loved her son Jacob the best, and partially indulgent, she put him in a way of deceiving his Father, and robbing his brother Esau of his birth-right.

So injudicious a fondness laid the foundation of much mischief, and was a weakness and blemish in the character of Rebekah; for Esau, as was very natural, after being defrauded, hated Jacob, and he once intimated, that after the days of mourning for his father were over, he would slay his brother.

Rebekah, fearing Esau's fury and resentment; and to prevent his designs on Jacob, advised her favourite son to absent himself, he did so, and lived at a great distance many years.

In the hopeful gaiety of early life this had led Jacob to form high expectations of happiness—

Jacob

Jacob was sorely disappointed—He had been told by Isaac his father,

“ God would bless him with the dew of Heaven, and the fatness of the Earth, with plenty of corn and wine—that people were to serve him, and nations to bow down to him—a Lord over his brethren.—”

But the history informs us, Jacob, in order to preserve his own life, and avoid his brother's resentment, was driven forth from his country, and the protection of his father's house, necessitated to seek an establishment in the family of Laban; and after a long servitude for a woman whom he loved, Leah (another sister) was treacherously imposed upon him, and one whom he could not love—Jacob served seven years more for Rachel.

His children afterwards were sources of more trouble. Reuben was incestuous; Judah adulterous; his daughter Dinah dishonoured; the conduct of Simeon and Levi, two of his sons, distressed him; two of his grand-children were suddenly struck dead; Rachel, his beloved wife, was taken from him in circumstances which embittered his sorrow; his son Joseph torn from him in youthful prime; and he himself necessarily

tously driven in his old age, at one hundred and thirty, to go and spend his last days in Egypt among a people who held it an abomination to eat bread with him.

Isaac and Rebekah had endeavoured to convince Esau, it was the appointment of God; He had decreed the succession before either he or his brother were born; it were in vain (they said) to oppose the Providence of God, instead of recovering the blessing, he would bring down a terrible curse on his own head.

By such arguments they reconciled Esau, he seemed quite to have conquered his animosity, and some years after, when the two brothers met, a tender, brotherly, and affectionate interview took place, it closed by Esau's kind and very hearty invitation to Mount Seir, the place of his habitation.

It was long after the quarrel, when Jacob, in great Prosperity, returned back with his wives, and his wealth, and his little ones. As he drew near home, the wrong he had done his brother, and the dread of meeting Esau, more and more distressed him; and when Jacob saw Esau advancing

ing to meet him, his heart trembled and he fainted.

After Jacob had recovered himself and could proceed on a little farther, Esau saw his brother, he ran forwards to meet him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him. Esau then enquired after his wives and his little ones, and overcome by the affectionate interview, both Brother's wept.

A conscious feeling of the wrong he had done his brother still distresses Jacob, but Esau's generous deportment is wonderful, upon Jacob's making an offering a present as it were of reparation,

"What meanest thou (says Esau) by all this
"drove?"

Jacob replies,

"To gain me favour in the sight of my Lord."

Esau with dignity refused.

"Brother, I have enough, keep all that thou
"hast for thyself."

Jacob

Jacob seemed quite disappointed ; earnestly solicitous his brother should accept his present, he says,

“ I pray thee, Brother, receive it ; accept a
 “ token of reconciliation ; this day should be
 “ highly honoured and distinguished ; it has re-
 “ stored me to the embraces of my Brother, my
 “ transport is more than I can express ; in thy
 “ presence I rejoice as in the presence of a
 “ God.”

Esau now finding his brother's heart in the request, and a further denial unkind, with delicacy and true generosity yielded to his entreaties, and accepted his presents.

Jacob did not then proceed to Mount Seir, he built a house at Succoth, and afterwards removed to Salem, a city belonging to the Sichemites, Jacob purchased a piece of ground, and resided here with all his family, and his flocks. Here he built an altar, and inscribed it to the *Mighty God of Israel*. Near this place was the celebrated well, ever after called Jacob's Well, still more famous by our Saviour's here meeting and talking with the woman of Samaria.

Jacob's days of trouble seemed now to be over, he lived many years in peace, encreasing in wealth with all his family, beloved and much respected ; till, upon some quarrel, two of his sons, Simeon and Levi, treacherously massacred many of the inhabitants who were their neighbours. Jacob was sorely distressed, and severely reprimanded them for their inhumanity. And upon this riot and barbarous behaviour of his sons, Jacob removed nearer to Mamre, where his father Isaac still lived.

God was here pleased to reveal himself to Jacob, and directed him to go and dwell at Bethel. After some time Jacob returned back to Mamre, and continued with his blind, decrepid, and very aged parent till he died. Isaac had arrived to the age of one hundred and eighty. Esau and Jacob buried their father in the cave of Macpelah, with Abraham and Sarah. Esau returned to Mount Seir, and Jacob continued to live at Mamre. The characters of the two brothers may be thus contrasted.

Esau was bold and manly, impetuous in his passions, but honest, often generous, and on the slightest concession forgiving. Jacob had more artifice, and he had formerly practised it with his
 mother,

mother, they had contrived several schemes together against Esau. The virtues and vices of Esau partook of the violence of his character, the one shone without studious display, the other prevailed without restraint. Jacob's virtues were more mild and regular ; Esau's the spontaneous growth of his heart, those of Jacob were produced by reflection. The vices of Esau were transient, those of Jacob made a deeper and more lasting impression.

It was not long after Isaac's death, and Jacobs return to Mamre, that his very beautiful and beloved son Joseph, seventeen years old, was sold by his brethren to a company of Ishmaelitish merchants, who were travelling with a cargo of spices into Egypt. As Jacob's other sons returned home, they killed a kid, and having purposely kept Joseph's upper garment, they dyed it in the blood, and treacherously imposed on the distracted father, by telling him a wild beast had devoured their brother.

Joseph, carried into Egypt, was sold to an Officer of the King's guard, named Potiphar ; his diligence, industry, and trustiness, gained him the good-will and respect of his Master, and promotion in his family. He served him ten years,

and then, for his virtuous abhorrence of a base intrigue, this amiable innocent youth was, on his mistress's accusation, cast into the king's prison. His wife modest behaviour, and winning manners gained him the favour and notice of the keeper, he employed Joseph as his deputy, and soon intrusted all the prisoners to his care.

Two of some distinction, who had both held profitable places at Court, the one chief butler, and the other the king's baker, had very extraordinary dreams; Joseph interpreted them, and precisely told the time they would be fulfilled. The butler, as Joseph foretold, was in three day's time restored to his place, and the baker was hanged. Joseph made a friend of the butler, confidentially told him his whole story, and besought his interest to get him out of prison. But his fellow-prisoner and his good offices were all forgot till two years after, when Pharoah's two famous dreams obliged him to call him to mind, and he then recommended Joseph as a very wise and knowing interpreter. On this occasion Joseph was immediately sent for to the Palace. Pharoah related to him what he had dreamt, and offered a large reward to whosoever should interpret his dreams.

Seven fat cows, feeding on the banks of the Nile, devoured by seven lean ones.

Seven full ears of corn devoured by seven blasted ones.

Joseph told the king both dreams represented one and the same event.

The seven fat cows and the seven full ears signified seven years of excessive plenty. The seven lean cows, and blasted ears, seven years of scarcity and famine which would succeed them.

Joseph submissively and most respectfully advised his Majesty to employ a trusty and expert man as Overseer to build granaries, and send officers into every province, and lay up one-fifth part of the corn grown during the seven years of plenty, against the following years of famine.

Pharaoh, his nobles, and all his court, were astonished at the wisdom and modesty of the young stranger, and concluded no one could be so fit to be set over the kingdom as Joseph, and he said no Overseer was likely so faithfully to execute the wise proposals he had made as himself, Pharaoh appointed Joseph master over all his household; he took his ring from off his finger, and

and presented it to Joseph ; he ordered him a dress of fine linen ; and a chain of gold to be hung about his neck.

Pharaoh then issued out orders, proclaiming him superintendant over his whole kingdom, inferior in authority only to himself. The king gave him in marriage the daughter of the prince of Heliopolis. Pharaoh (in Eastern pomp) placed Joseph in a splendid carriage, with livery servants running before him ; the King commanded all his subjects to bow the knee to Joseph.

Thus happily ended thirteen years of virtuous sufferings, and they were rewarded with no less than eighty years of the highest sublunary bliss.

Established in his new government, thus highly honoured, and in the full exercise of his authority, Joseph took a Circuit over the whole kingdom ; he built granaries, and appointed stewards and officers, immense loads were brought in and safely deposited ; his granaries were all full, and above all measure, before the seven years of plenty were over. As Joseph had foretold the years of scarcity and famine began, it was felt all over the land of Canaan, and the distress extended to all the nations round about it. From all quarters applications

plications were made to Pharoah, and the king referred them all to Joseph.

Jacob soon learnt there was corn in Egypt, and his family being in great want, he sent ten of his sons down thither to buy some. On their arrival in Egypt, the travellers were directed to the Governor's house, to obtain an order and permission to buy. Joseph knew his brethren. He chose to conceal himself, but he could not altogether resist his feelings, he instantly enquired (though obscurely) after his father and the family. He then forwarded them with orders for a large supply, and sent them back, all but one, loaded with full sacks, as his family were in want, directing them, when they returned for more, to bring the younger brother they had told him of along with them. Jacob rejoiced to receive so liberal a supply, but being told all their adventures, and the Governor's request respecting his beloved boy, he wept sorely.

The scarcity and their wants were very great, a supply soon became necessary, his sons came to him their promise to the Governor, they refuse to go without Benjamin, and they now told him his commands were absolute and peremptory respecting him. The aged parent most sorrowfully assented,

mented, and they all set out on a second embassy to Egypt.

On their arrival they were directed to the Governor's house, and ordered all to wait there. A most feeling and interesting story—a parley and discovery—the tenderest and most affecting interview, ending in a burst of surprize and joy, and an invitation to his father, brothers, and all their families to come into Egypt, for (says Joseph)

“ There are yet five Years more in the which
“ there shall be neither earing nor harvest.”

The land of Goshen, situated on the borders of Canaan, not far from Hierapolis, Joseph's seat and principal Residence, a most fruitful and beautiful spot, between the Nile and the borders of the Red Sea, was appointed by Pharoah for them and for their cattle. The King sent them wag-gons, provisions, and carriages, and ten asses laden with the choicest commodities, to feast and accommodate all the family.

As soon as the old man, his children, and his grand-children, their wives, and their little ones, came near the borders of Egypt, Joseph set out
in

in his chariot, with the highest joy, to meet his Father, a meeting to be felt, but not to be described, exquisite were the feelings of Jacob, although now a hundred and thirty, and tender and affectionate his sons.

“ Joseph fell on his neck and wept.”

Soon as he dried his tears, and this tender greeting was over, Joseph drove to the Palace, and carried the News himself to Pharoah. The King desires he may see and congratulate the old man; Jacob is ushered into the palace, and he pays his homage; Pharoah simply enquired his age, and Jacob answers:

“ The days of the years of my pilgrimage are
“ one hundred and thirty; few and evil have the
“ days of the years of my life been.”

an answer beyond the Monarch's enquiry, but it shewed a heart bleeding afresh at the recollection of its sorrows.

Joseph now accompanied his father to the land of Goshen, and settles him and all his family, after this tender and most affectionate reception, and very sincere and hearty welcome.

The Hebrews, though they were at first thus hospitably invited as guests, and graciously received, were afterwards sorely oppressed, in captivity and bondage, under a succeeding Pharaoh *, one hundred and twenty-nine years.

“ There arose a new King over Egypt, who knew
“ not Joseph.”

[2432.] Moses was their deliverer four hundred and thirty years after Abraham came into Canaan, and two hundred and fifteen years from Jacob's descent into Egypt. Moses was called of God, and by him appointed Head, Leader, and Chief over Israel. He led them out of Egypt by the way of the Red Sea. Six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, the Lord conducting them under the direction of a visible cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, and they carried the bones of Joseph along with them.

At the sea-coast, Pharaoh and a numerous army came in sight of them, upon which Moses waved his wand over the waters, and they instantly divided into a heap, to the right hand and to the left, by which means the Israelites walked through, on dry land, to the wilderness of Etham.

* A Name given to all their Kings.

Pharaoh

Pharoah and his host drove furiously after them, and they were, at the dawning of the day, every one of them drowned, the dead carcases swam in great numbers on the sea, and they covered the shore.

About three months after the Israelites had left Egypt, they arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai, the highest and most inaccessible Mountain in the East, and it was held sacred by all the inhabitants round about it.

Here was heard that awful voice of God which so terrified the Israelites ; and God appeared to Moses in a flame of fire in a bush, which notwithstanding was not wasted or consumed. He was commanded to take off his shoes, and ascend the hill to the top, and Moses was absent forty days and forty nights.

Moses here received the laws, or ten commandments ; ceremonial rites and orders respecting sacrifice ; ordinances for the administration of justice and deciding controversies.

The original laws of righteousness, engraven on the heart, were obliterated and much defaced, they are here expressed in words, and wrote on

tables of stone, by the direction of God, who was pleased in this awful and most tremendous manner to restore to the Jews the grand laws of morality, and by them transmit them to all nations. Commands thus authoritatively stamped, were persuasive exhortations to vigilance, and powerful restraints to the torrent of vice and impiety.

Notwithstanding these and other striking miracles and interpositions, Israel rebelled, and God signally punished their disobedience, for the space of forty years God led by the hand this immense multitude all round the deserts of Arabia, yet all the time mercifully feeding and cloathing them, and Moses their deliverer employed every day in instructing and training them up for the promised land ; they had much to learn, many vices to conquer, much obstinacy to subdue, and they were thus long under a discipline intermixed with the greatest tenderness and severity, and at last conducted by Moses only to the borders of Canaan. He there, at the age of one hundred and twenty, dies on Mount Nebo, Joshua his general, and the seventy Elders, and Eleazar the High Priest, accompanied him to the foot of the mountain, they there all took a sorrowful leave, and Moses went up to the summit alone, and was from
thence

thence permitted to take a view of the country. He on this spot afterwards died, and was buried in a very private manner in the land of Moab.

A few days before his death, Moses assembled all the tribes of Israel, publicly and solemnly appointed Joshua his successor, Head, Leader, and Chief over Israel.

Joshua, at the age of ninety-three, enters Canaan. As soon as the Priests who bore the Ark came to the edge and touched the waters of the River Jordan, a passage was opened for them of sixteen miles in breadth, and the Israelites walked through on dry land. God thus signaling their new Commander in like manner as he had honoured Moses at the Red Sea.

Joshua boldly marched his army to the plains of Jericho, four miles from the City, and eight from the River Jordan. He afterwards subdued the Canaanites, took seven famous Cities, and obtained possession of a considerable part of the land.

Joshua died at the age of one hundred and ten, and was buried on the hill of Gaash, in the tribe of Ephraim.

After

After the death of Joshua, each tribe was for some time governed by its own Heads and Elders, electing its own General and Commander, but high and eminent characters, Champions, and Deliverers of Israel, God, from time to time raised up, and they assumed the government under the title of

JUDGES; these were extraordinary magistrates, whose office was, to preside in the senate, protect the state, pronounce the law, and regulate divine worship.

A regular succession of fourteen maintained the dignity two hundred and fifty years; but many years of servitude and bondage intervened between some of them.

Eight years under Chusan-Rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia; Eighteen years in bondage to Moab; Twenty under the Canaanites; Seven under the Medianites; Eighteen under the Amorites; and Forty under bondage to the Philistines.

The gallant **OTHNIEL**, by his good conduct and bravery obtained a rich heiress, the daughter of Caleb, Joshua's general, and commander in chief.

Seven

The dignity and title of Judge was first conferred upon him, and he governed Israel forty years.

EHUD was the second; a brave and resolute soldier, who, while he was paying the yearly tribute to Eglon king of Moab, at the hazard of his own life, murdered him, and rescued Israel from bondage. EHUD maintained the government eighty years.

The third was the valiant SHAMGAR, who slew six hundred Philistines with a Plough-share. He died at the end of the first year.

DEBORAH the Prophetess was the fourth Judge, and Barak was her general, she governed Israel forty years.

At the appointment of God, GIDEON succeeded to the government as fifth Judge, and the Angel sent to him on this occasion, saluted him by the honourable title of Saviour of Israel. Gideon judged Israel forty years.

ABIMELECH, a natural son of Gideon, usurped the dignity, He was cruel, base, and ambitious, and put to death all his brethren but one (no less than sixty-nine) at the end of three years he came to an ignominious death himself.

TOLAR,

TOLAR, of the tribe of Issachar, was the next Judge of Israel; he retained the government twenty-two years, and was succeeded by

JAIR, a wealthy man, of the tribe of Manasseh, he held in his own right thirty cities, and he had thirty sons, to each of which he gave a city, two and twenty years he governed Israel.

After the death of **JAIR**, the Israelites, again in servitude and bondage, elected

JEPHTHAH; and he marched against the Amonites and overthrew them, but by one rash vow he sullied all his glory, and the joy and pleasure of the triumph, and the spoils. **JEPHTHAH** was Judge of Israel six years.

ISSAN was their tenth Judge, a native of Bethlehem; he had threescore children, thirty sons and thirty daughters, he lived to see them all married, and a very numerous progeny of grandchildren. **ISSAN** governed Israel seven years, and was succeeded by

ELON, of the tribe of Zebulon, who, after maintaining the dignity ten years, was buried at Ajalon, a city in his own tribe.

ABDON

AADON Son of Hillel of the tribe of Ephraim, was the twelfth Judge ; He sat eighty years. **AADON** left forty sons, and thirty grand-sons, and they all rode on asses' colts, after the manner of the great and wealthy men in Israel.

ELI was the first who joined the dignity of Judge to that of High Priest. Notwithstanding, under the government of Eli, the people became again idolatrous, and were under servitude and bondage to the Philistines. **ELI**, though a good man, was very indolent and remiss both in the management of his own family, and in his government.

The Israelites were more and more oppressed, and in the severity of their thralldom they most earnestly besought the Lord.

God sent them a Deliverer most wonderful from his birth to his death, a Hero of most extraordinary strength and valour. He was granted as a Blessing to his Parents and the Nation. An Angel had been twice commissioned to foretel his Birth, first to his Mother, a very old Woman, who had always been reputed barren, and afterwards to Moneah his Father, a native of Zorah, in the tribe of Dan. The Angel left a singular but very strict prohibition both respecting the

L

Mother

Mother and the Son. She named him **SAMPSON**, and he is said to have governed Israel, together with **ELI**, twenty years, besides which, the High Priest had maintained both dignities alone, twenty Years more.

SAMUEL was the last Judge of Israel. On his resignation, and long before his Death, the reign of the Judges ended, the government was exchanged, and the Kingdom became Monarchical.

SAMUEL was another miraculous Child, granted to the pious and very fervent prayers of his Mother, and by a most solemn Vow, Hannah dedicated her Child to God, he entered early into the service of the Temple, and was provided for there, at three Years of age. In every little office in his power, he ministered to the High Priest in his holy functions, girded round with a linen Ephod, and his first employment was, to open and shut the doors of the tabernacle.

SAMUEL grew up a most exemplary, amiable, and highly virtuous character, a Prophet and Judge of Israel twenty years, always beloved, revered, and applauded. **SAMUEL** had appointed his two sons, Joel and Abiah, to assist him in the administration of Justice at Beer-sheba, the
extremity

extremity of his Kingdom. The People were displeased with their conduct, and accused them of corruption and bribery.

The Heads and Elders of Israel assembled and came in a body to Ramah, and demanded of SAMUEL a King, his two Sons, both (they said) were unworthy to be his Successor. SAMUEL long expostulated and reasoned with them, would fain have convinced them of their ingratitude, and upbraided them, explaining most wisely and in the strongest terms what they would suffer by such an Exchange and Revolution. The Monarchs of the East were always arbitrary, despotic, and tyrannical, SAMUEL sweetly described the high exercise of their Authority, Lordliness, and Ambition :

“ He will take your Sons to drive his Chariots,
 “ and be his Horsemen, and some shall run before
 “ him. Captains shall preside over thousands,
 “ and Captains over Fifties. Ye shall Ear his
 “ ground, and reap his harvest, and make his
 “ spears, and build his chariots. Your Daugh-
 “ ters he will take to be his servants, to cook his
 “ meat, and bake his bread. He will seize your
 “ Fields, and your Vineyards, and your Olive-
 “ grounds, and give them to his Courtiers.

"Your men-servants and your maid-servants,
"and your goodliest young men, and your asses,
"he will put them to his Work."

Nevertheless the people refused to listen, one
and all trying out,

"Nay, but we will have a King over us."

On this obstinate and determined resolution,
both of the people and their Elders, SAMUEL,
at the appointment of God, anointed Saul, King
of Israel, a very tall and beautiful youth, one of
the Sons of Kish, and of the Tribe of Ben-
jamin.

SAUL reigned over Israel Forty years, and after
a total defeat, and most bloody slaughter, three
of his brave Sons already among the slain, him-
self mangled, wounded, and dying, in deep de-
spair, he is said to have preferred falling on his
own sword, rather than be carried off by the ene-
my, streaming with blood, dying, and yet not
dead.

This Event opened for DAVID a fair and very
natural road to the Crown. Ishbosheth, a surviv-
ing son of Saul, and David (who had before been
anointed by Samuel) were both proclaimed, the
former

former by Abner, his Father's General, and David was elected by the tribe of Judah, and crowned at Hebron; the government thus divided continued seven years and a half; Ishboeth was then murdered by two of his own officers; and they brought his head to Hebron, and presented it to David. Upon this event all the Tribes assembled and came to pay him homage, and they now anointed him again, and by sound of Trumpet proclaimed him King over all Israel.

The Government thus united and established continued during the Reigns of David and his son Solomon, but after Solomon's death, two Tribes only acknowledged Rehoboam his son, who was stiled King of Judah, and ten Tribes revolted under Jeroboam, a spirited and gallant youth, some time Governor over the Tribe of Ephraim, and over the Tribe of Manassah. Jeroboam assumed the Title of King of Israel.

Throughout the Old Testament they are ever afterwards thus divided and distinguished, and the History records the reigns of twenty successive Kings of Judah, and nineteen Kings who reigned over Israel. Of these Hoshea was the last, in the ninth year of his Reign, and 721 years before the Birth of our Saviour, Samaria, the Israelitish Capital,

Capital, was taken by Shalmaneser King of Assyria; Hoshea and all his People were made Captive; a total end was hereby put to the Kingdom of Israel, after it had stood a separate Kingdom from Judah two hundred and fifty-six years.

Judah remained a Kingdom one hundred and thirty four years longer, and ended as a Monarchy with the Captivity of the Jews in Babylon; they were in bondage there seventy years. The City of Jerusalem, and the superb and very magnificent Temple, were first plundered, then burnt to the ground, and the whole country was laid waste.

To this Period the Kingdom of Judah had descended uninterruptedly in the line of David.

At the end of seventy years, and in the first year of the Reign of Cyrus, the highly celebrated Hero, founder of the Persian Monarchy, and Conqueror of Babylon, the Prophet Daniel, ever zealous for his country, interested himself with that Prince, pointed out to him the Prophecies respecting the Jews, upon which Cyrus published an Edict for their release, and gave them leave to return to Jerusalem, and rebuild their City and Temple,

After

After the Jews had been sold as slaves, and dispersed through a vast and mighty Empire, fifty thousand of them only were collected and returned, and these were chiefly from among the poorer sort.

Zerubbabel, a Prince of the blood royal, a Grandson of Jehoiakim, He first led them out, and together with the Heads of some few respectable families, a Council was formed, and the Jewish affairs in Church and State regulated and re-established.

Under Ezra, a very learned Jew of the House of Aaron, about seventy years afterwards, another but much smaller body set out for Jerusalem. Ezra received his Commission from Persia, by orders from Artaxerxes Longimanus, and he governed them as Viceroy thirteen years. Ezra was then succeeded by נְהֶמְיָאֵה, * a patriotic, amiable, and good man, who was at that time sent from Shushan with new Powers and authority. Nehemiah was the last they commissioned. The Government was afterwards maintained by the High Priest then in office, till the Persian Empire was destroyed by Alexander the Great. The

* Year of the World 3582, and 422 before CHRIST.

Jews

Jews had enjoyed till that Period peace, security, and protection, in common with the subjects of the Persian Empire.

After the Death of that highly celebrated Conqueror, his Kingdoms and Empire were divided among his general Officers. Sad and cruel were the scenes of bloodshed and impiety which followed. The Jews suffered the most horrid barbarities and persecutions. For some years all worship to the God of Israel ceased. The Jewish Ceremonies and Sacrifice were suppressed in Jerusalem. The Temple polluted with blood, and the filthiest abominations, and the Statue of Jupiter was set up on the Altar of burnt-offerings for publick homage and adoration.

MATTATHIAS, a Priest zealous for the Law of God, and his worship, was among the first who opposed the progress of this bloody and murderous Apostacy, and after him Judas Maccabeus his Son, and a race of Heroes of his family, with an intrepidity and zeal almost incredible rescued them, entered the cities, destroyed the Syrian Guard, pulled down the Images and heathen Altars, opened the Synagogues, and at length the Temple, and re-established the Jewish worship, and the Solemnities of Sacrifice. Many
and

and glorious were the Victories they from time to time had gained, and the Honours, Privileges, and Prosperity they had procured for their Countrymen, but a tranquility thus enjoyed under the Maccabees (called the Asmodean family) was at last disturbed by Aristobulus, a descendant of Mattathias, and younger brother of Hyrcan. Both Brothers made their appeal to Pompey, the Roman Emperor, and Hyrcan was re-established. On the obstinacy of the Jews, their impiety and ingratitude, God was pleased to give them up into the hands of the Romans, who now, for the first time, made them tributary on Hyrcans restoration and establishment.

The Asmodean Race did not long survive the disgrace of their Country. Herod, an Idumean by birth, obtained by his Interests at Rome, the Kingdom of Judæa. He reigned thirty-seven Years. At the death of Herod, the Kingdom was divided into four Parts, each was called a Tetrarchy, and governed by a Prince who afterwards bore the title of Tetrarch.

While the Jews were under bondage and Subjection to Rome, Pontius Pilate being Governor, OUR SAVIOUR was born and lived amongst them, publickly taught in their Synagogues and Tem-

M

ple,

ple. daily performed many wonderful Miracles, causing the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and even the dead were raised to life in proof and confirmation of his doctrine. By fulfilling all the Prophecies respecting himself, he afforded his Countrymen most ample and undeniable evidence of his being the Messias. During the Space of three Years, he went about explaining all the Duties of life, and enforcing his divine Morality by the most winning, amiable, and condescending manners, the wisest precepts, and all the attractive Charms and Majesty of Example.

The Jews, incorrigible and blind, obstinately resisting, opposing, and at length killing the Lord of Life, filled up the measure of their iniquity. God now permitted the Romans (provoked by their frequent insurrections and rebellion) very soon after to put a final end to their Polity, utterly to destroy and erase the very foundations of their City and Temple even with a plough-share; to burn their Palaces, persecute, enslave, and disperse them throughout so many Centuries, and over all the World, where they are yet most wonderfully preserved, a people distinct, unmixed, surviving all their Conquerors, incorporated with no one Nation, Kingdom, or Empire, and although

though thus blended and subsisting, they are still unconnected with them all.

The Jewish Government was under the immediate Direction of God, especially in all difficult and extraordinary Cases.

He gave them a Code of Laws, a complete Ritual of Worship, suited to the Times and the well known Temper and Prejudices of the people ; hereby, he impressed awfully and persuasively the Knowledge of Himself, the One only living and true God, and the Worship He would accept ; establishing among them Piety, Morality, public Virtue, private and domestic happiness.

Jehovah was their Judge, Law-giver, and King ; the High Priest was his Prime Minister ; he entered into a Compact with his People, formed their Polity, and was Himself their Commander ; He issued out his Orders and Rules of War ; He led their Armies ; He fought their Battles ; the LORD of their Host ; the GOD of the Armies of Israel.

The happiest of all Periods, the most enviable of all Governments.

It was a Tradition among the Jews, the World would last Six Thousand Years: They divided them into three equal Periods.

FIRST, From the Creation to the Delivery of the Law by Moses.

SECOND, The Period that Law was to remain in Force.

THIRD, Was for the Days of the MESSIAH.

Hence the Three Distinctions,
Under the PATRIARCHS,
the LAW, and
the MESSIAH.

The Ages have also been divided into Seven distinct Era's.

FIRST. Ending with the Flood, 2349 Years before Christ.

SECOND. The ABRAHAMIC, ending at the birth of Ishmael, 1910 Years before Christ.

THIRD.

THIRD. The MOSAIC, ending when MOSES was Eighty Years of Age, 1491 Years before Christ.

FOURTH. Begins with the Institution of the Passover, and ends with the commencement of the Reign of Solomon, 1014 Years before Christ.

FIFTH. Ends with Nebuchadnezer's Conquest of Egypt and Judæa, 569 Years before Christ.

SIXTH. Ends with the Birth of OUR SAVIOUR.





ESSAY IV.

ON THE
FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES
CALLED THE
PENTATEUCH.

- I. GENESIS, or Generation.
- II. EXODUS, Departure out of Egypt.
- III. LEVITICUS, Laws for the Priests.
- IV. NUMBERS, Numbering the People.
- V. DEUTERONOMY, Repetition.



G E N E S I S,

• R

G E N E R A T I O N.

ALTHOUGH the Israelites were separated from amidst an Idolatrous World in order to preserve the knowledge of the one Supreme God and Father of all, and the Purity of his Worship, by living all their Lives in Egypt, they had acquired a strong Prejudice in favour of local Deities, and under the Impression of such Ideas, the Israelites supposed the Worship of them, consistent, and admissible with that of the the Supreme JEHOVAH.

N

Moses

Moses endeavours to dissuade them, and counter-acts this Propensity, by telling them, that **THEIR God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,** He it was who made the whole World, Sun, Moon, and Stars, and all Creatures, these Symbols of the Egyptian Deities, to which they ignorantly bowed and paid their Adoration.

The Book of **GENESIS** is the only authentic History of the first Ages of the World, from the Creation to the Flood, a Period of 1656 Years, accurately preserving the **Genealogy** from Adam to Noah, and you will read it in the family History and familiar domestic Anecdotes of only nine Patriarchs*.

Moses, our inspired Historian, before he even gives their Names, or issued out his Code of Laws to inform his people of their Duty, wisely and magnificently prefaces his Book with the Creation of the World; and the sublime Simplicity, the gradual and methodical Process, the commencement and first very natural Division of Time, are all highly curious and wonderful.

* Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Methalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech.

That

That glorious Emanation Light, first-born of God, and brightest Emblem of his Purity, is the Work of the FIRST Day, together with the vicissitude of Night and Day.

The elevation of the Air, forming an Atmosphere, the SECOND.

On the THIRD day the Waters were collected, and boundaries affixed them, immediately the dry land was covered with Vegetables.

On the FOURTH, The Sun burst forth in full Splendour, enlightening and cherishing the World; and in the Evening rose the Moon in the fulness of her Majesty and Glory, mildly illuminating the immense Expanse, and each had its Laws affixed, and each its Course assigned it.

On the FIFTH, Fish swam innumerable in the Waters, and flying Fowl were formed, and both received a Benediction from their Creator.

On the SIXTH, The Earth having acquired Solidity, and the Air fitted for Respiration, the production of Land Animals followed, and God created Man, amongst them all, the noblest.

With sweet Simplicity and Elegance, it describes the Primitive State of Man, and God, his Creator, places him in a fruitful and well-watered Garden, luxuriant with Herbage, Trees, and Fruits, and Flowers ; and here he makes trial of the Talents he had given him, and commands him to give a Name to each and every one of the numerous Creatures around him ; and Adam summonses the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of the Sky, and every Reptile to pay homage to their Lord, and as each one passed, in order before him, he affixed a Name to them all. But as these spoke only a language understood each by his own Species, and expressive of a benevolence and affection mutual and peculiar to one another, the Sovereign of this vast Empire still moved a solitary and alone, unfit for the Society of pure Spirits, and yet far above the wisest of the Creatures around him, impressed with a variety of Ideas, and inspired with language, but no suitable Companion to whom he could tell his thoughts, and breathe out his affection, God is therefore pleased to provide for Adam, and whilst he lay fast asleep, his senses wearied, and spirits exhausted with the vast variety of entertaining objects which had employed him, God formed a Woman out of his Side, of one of his ribs, and brought her and presented her to Adam.

Adam, arrayed with Beauty, and all the attractive charms of Grace and Modesty.

Overjoyed, Adam declares her, the dear Companion of his Life.

In possession of a World, Adam soon loses his Sovereignty; the Dispensation of Innocence was short; he is supposed to have enjoyed his Paradise only seven years. Disobedience was followed with unruly passions, mutual upbraidings, a sense of guilt, shame, disgust, remorse, alarm, a sentence of death, expulsion from the Garden of Paradise.

And now follows the History of his two eldest Sons, Cain and Abel, the one, as he grew up, was a Tiller of the Ground, and Abel was a Shepherd; their Dispositions were widely different, and Cain murders his Brother, an Event highly distressful to his Parents, and afforded them the first certain demonstration of a future State. Two young men, brothers, the one wicked, the other righteous; the one incurred God's displeasure, the other his favour; this latter, in the flower of his Youth, was murdered for his Piety, the former, though a murderer, permitted to live.

A future reckoning and retribution could only explain the history.

This

This Book will make you very inquisitive respecting ENOCH, the first Astronomer and Mathematician, the Inventor of Letters, and the use of the Pen, the distinguished favour and honour granted him on account of his Piety, an Exchange of Worlds without dying. With elegant Simplicity Moses, his historian, says,

“ Enoch walked with God, and he was not.”

The Apostle Paul paraphrases it,

“ By Faith Enoch was translated, that he
“ might not see death, and was not found be-
“ cause God had translated him, for before his
“ translation, he had this testimony, that he
“ pleased God.”

In these very early Ages God was pleased thus to give Men another Demonstration respecting a Life to come, in order to confirm and strengthen their belief.

The History now relates the Universal Deluge when it continued raining three hundred and seventy-seven Days, and exhibits the highly amiable and exemplary Character of Noah, and his distinguished Reward. Noah was the Son of Lamech, and amidst Scenes of debauchery, corruption, and vice, was found perfect in his Generation

ration ; he also is said to have walked with God. When the Sentence for utter Destruction passed, he alone found favour in the sight of God, and was by him directed how to build an Ark, or Vessel, in which Noah and his family escaped this tremendous and general extirpation of a World.

It gives the Genealogy, Ages, Lives, and Death of the Patriarchs, and the history of their Descendants, a wonderful and pleasing account of the early Stages of the World, the rude beginnings of Order and Civilization, the Invention of Arts and Sciences, the division of Mankind into Nations and Languages, the commencement of Monarchy, and the Reign of Nimrod the first King.

Nimrod was a famous Huntsman, and as Men lived in Tents and scattered Tribes, he taught them to chase and destroy the wild Beasts, thus gaining their affection, he at length acquired a Sovereignty and Rule over them, founded two of the most populous and magnificent Cities, Babylon and Nineveh, and these rose afterwards to be parts of the greatest Empire in the World. A Life so ornamental in the Annals of History is barely named; the irreligious are unnoticed by
Moses,

Moses, or mentioned with a seeming regret to their memory.

Nimrod began his Reign in the Year of the World 1757, and he reigned one hundred and forty-eight years.

The Story of ABRAHAM, heir of a World, with that highly exalted title God himself gave him,

“ Abraham, my Friend.”

superior to all that flattery gratitude or custom could bestow, the noblest pattern of Faith, Obedience, and Resignation ever recorded; a Life most instructive and glorious. After this, the life and History of Isaac, becomes more and more interesting, his filial Piety, his extraordinary Fortitude, his domestic Duties, his marriage, and the pleasing person of Rebekah, the simplicity of the Times, the sweet coincidence of little incidents at their meeting, and the birth of his two Sons. Jacob, the Father of the twelve Tribes, and Esau, the Founder of the Edomites and Idumæans.

The Book goes on with family Anecdotes, the Mother's partiality, and the sad mischief it occasioned: her favourite Son is drove from his
Father's

Father's house, to save his life, and hide himself from Esau. But the Goodness of God follows Jacob every where, and encourages him the very first night of his absence. You are struck with the pleasing manner God imparted Knowledge and Comfort to this lonely Traveller; he was wandering after Sun-set, and not very near any Town, Jacob resolves (though delicately brought up by his fond Mother) to make the Earth his bed, and a stone his pillow, thus exposed to chills and damps, he kept musing o'er his troubles, and perhaps the happier lot of Esau; a welcome sleep chased away his gloom, and he dreamt a dream which delighted his very Soul,

“ He saw a Ladder, the top was above the
 “ Clouds, and its foot set upon Earth, Angels
 “ of God were ascending and descending upon
 “ it. High above all, Jacob saw the Lord of
 “ Heaven, and he said, I am the God of Abra-
 “ ham, and the God of Isaac thy Father. The
 “ Land on which thou liest, to thee will I give
 “ it, and to thy seed. In them shall the families
 “ of all the Earth be blessed.”

Jacob awoke awfully impressed, surely God is here, and Jacob was sore afraid, he set up his Pillar, a Stone of remembrance, and he called

the nearest Town Bethel (the House of God) and its name before was Luz.

A train of interesting and very curious events soon follows, which brought about the settling of Jacob and his family in the land of Egypt, the exquisitely affecting and well told story of Joseph, one of his sons, his thirteen years sufferings, and the glorious reward of no less than eighty years prosperity which followed them, the highly descriptive meeting between him and his Brethren, long after he had been a Favourite and Prime Minister to Pharaoh in the Egyptian Court, at that time the most splendid Court in the Universe.

Joseph was the youngest but one of the Sons of Jacob, and so distinguished and loved by his Father as to excite a Jealousy among his Brethren. In the openness of his heart, Joseph had told them his Dreams, and they seemed to portend dignity, and some advancement above them, and this heightened their envy and dislike.

One day, all in a party together, at a distance from home, his Brethren conspired against Joseph, in a moment of warmth they seized an opportunity that offered, and threw him into a pit,
and

and afterwards meeting a Caravan of travellers for Egypt, sold him to them for a Slave, imposed on their Father with a lie, a false relation of his death. Their resentment thus gratified, they lost even the remembrance of it. Jacob's family was rich and powerful, they lived long in prosperity, ^{no recollection} no remembrance of their cruelty or crimes.

Joseph, safely conducted by Providence through a variety of scenes, trials, and dangers, rose at last to be chief Favourite and Prime Minister to Pharaoh King of Egypt, at that time the most powerful Monarch in the World. During this his high and elevated station, a general famine wasted and starved all the neighbouring Countries—There was Corn alone in Egypt—by Joseph's foresight, prudence, and good management plenty reigned in Egypt.

Amongst other Sufferers from the Famine, Joseph's Brethren resorted thither to purchase corn, never once suspecting who the great Governor was, that they were making application to. But Joseph knew his Brethren. Brotherly love melted Joseph, a burst of affection effaced the remembrance of their cruelty, but he prudently concealed his purposes, and assumed an

appearance of severity, detained one brother, and dispatched the rest away all with full sacks as his family were in want, and insisted on their bringing into Egypt, Benjamin, his younger and his own Brother both by father and mother, and, who had not been of the party when they sold him. Joseph's design was to awaken in them a sense of their wrong Conduct, to revive a tenderness of Conscience, though he was really preparing for them all a vast surprize of joy. Joseph now therefore ordered his Brethren into prison, and here, strangers, confined in a foreign land, accused of Crimes of which they are innocent, Conscience brings to remembrance former sins, it recalled what Joseph had in view, their long forgotten cruelty to him.

Nothing can affect you more than this family scene, the interview of Joseph with his Brethren. He turns aside to dry his tears, tenderly dropping on Benjamin ; all impatience for the discovery ; he locks him in his arms, mingling tears and embraces ; then he went from one to the other, and hung on the necks of each of his brothers, Joseph wept ; they wept ; a dead silence ensued ; Joy, Fear, Surprise, Awe, stifle all expression but tears.

After

After this tender and family greeting, how pleasantly you view a picture of the times in sweet simplicity and pencilled with wonderful Art,

JOSEPH entertaining and feasting his Brethren.

The Book now gives you a minute account of the removal of Jacob and all his family into the land of Canaan, at the request and invitation of Pharaoh, who forwarded a large store of Provisions and Carriages for themselves and their baggage, and ten asses laden with fruit and the choicest commodities, and the King sent him the kindest messages, and the most hearty invitation to all his family and household.

It also relates the destruction of two famous Cities in the vale of Siddim, Sodom, and Gomorrah, under the government of two separate Monarchs.

God was pleased to reveal his intentions respecting them to his Servant Abraham, the cities were both destroyed, and at Abraham's importunate intreaties, Lot, who was his near relation, was miraculously saved.

Here

Here are many entertaining anecdotes, highly curious, both before and after his deliverance, the Uncle and the Nephew had once lived together, and on account of the very great increase of their flocks, (the riches of those days) they agreed to separate, and Lot moved Eastward, and pitched his tents in a delightful vale not far from Sodom, and he afterwards resided within the city gates, and was there, when the destroying Angel came down to execute the wrath of the Almighty, and the Angel himself led him at day-break, with all his family to a neighbouring city, named Zoar, which was spared on his account alone; they had no sooner got to this little city than immediately thunder, lightning, and a most horrible tempest, destroyed Sodom and all its numerous inhabitants. A singular punishment was inflicted on Lot's wife, in the very act of disobedience she was turned into a pillar of salt, and Josephus, the Jewish Historian, saw it standing in his days, and many other authors attest the truth of that very singular event.

Besides these two famous cities, there were several others situated near them on the plains of the river Jordan, at the same time, and in the same very tremendous manner destroyed, and a filthy Lake, called the Dead Sea, (as no fish

wh

whatever will live in it) fills up almost all the plain.

The dying words of Abraham and his son Isaac are never told us, but on winding up his book of Genesis, in language pathetic and divinely eloquent, Moses minutely related all that passed at the house of Jacob during these very interesting moments at his death.

On hearing he was sick Joseph pays a visit to his Father, and carries with him his two sons, a messenger runs before to tell of his coming. Jacob strengthened himself, assuming all the Father, and on Joseph's entering the room, after their first embraces, he enquired who the Children were, and Joseph said,

" Ephraim and Manasseh, my two sons, they are come to ask a blessing of my Father."

Jacob instantly replies,

" Your sons are mine, even as Simeon and Reuben." (naming the two eldest)

The sight of Joseph very naturally led the old man's thoughts to his Mother, and he tells him,

" Rachel

“ Rachel your mother died by me, and I
“ buried her at Ephrath. Joseph, where are
“ your boys? bring them to me and I will bless
“ them. I did not think, Joseph, of seeing thy
“ face, how good is God who gives me also
“ your children to see?”

and Jacob embraced and kissed them both—a
tender greeting—Joseph took them himself from
out his arms, and from between his knees, but
overcome with the scene Joseph fell on his face
before his Father. When he arose, Jacob blessed
Joseph, and pronounced an unexpected blessing
on the children, designedly setting the younger
far in honours above his brother, and Joseph's
remonstrance only confirmed the distinction and
prophetic blessing of the Grandfather.

As Joseph was taking his leave, his Father
tells him,

“ Behold, I die; but, Joseph, God will per-
“ form his Promise! You will see in my Will
“ a portion to thee more than to thy brothers,
“ with my sword and my bow I took it from the
“ Amorites.”

Jacob alluded to Sechem, and in the subsequent
distribution of the lands, this parcel of ground
was,

was without any opposition, added over and above to the Portion of Ephraim.—The following Chapter records Jacob's dying words to his Sons, when they were all assembled round their Father's bed. Jacob lays his hand on each of them, beginning with the eldest, and in words most awfully impressive, utters a striking Prophecy, big with events of the future over each and every one of them; after which, with dignity and composure, he gave his last directions respecting his Funeral, minutely describing and dwelling largely on the place, to shew how much his heart was set on being buried there: Fatigued, yet gratified with these last duties, and this parting interview, Jacob gathered up his feet, composed himself to rest, awaiting a peaceful slumber and the dismissal which very speedily followed.

The last Chapter relates his Son Joseph's affectionate kiss even after he was dead, and Joseph gave immediate directions for his Embalment, and orders for a general mourning throughout Egypt, and it lasted threescore and ten days.

During the first thirty, after the entrails were removed, the body was covered over with Salt-petre to harden the flesh and dry up the moisture; the remaining forty were employed in rubbing the body and filling up the cavities with odoriferous

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Gums

Gums and the richest Spices, they then wound rolls of filletting round and round the body and limbs, they sometimes used a thousand Ells, and lastly, they covered all over with a rich Gum which they used instead of glue. The art was performed with so much skill that the resemblance was retained, and the features very often traced.

At the expiration of seventy days, in princely pomp the funeral procession commenced : Joseph chief mourner, then followed all the Nobles of the Egyptian Court, the Officers of State, Civil and Military, all the Household of Joseph, and his Brethren, and his Father's House, a long train of Chariots and Horsemen for accommodation and defence, and a great multitude followed.

This Book relates the transactions of 2369 years, displays the most interesting of all Scenes ever yet recorded. It carries you back to the beginning of Time, to mankind in infancy, to Societies yet forming, when Men only lived in Tents and scattered Tribes, and family conversation and domestic events composed all the materials for History ; it tells you all with wonderful simplicity, and finishes with the Death of Joseph ; he had lived eighty years highly honoured in the Court of Pharaoh, and died at the age of one hundred and ten.

His

His Body was first embalmed, and then buried at Sechem, where a most magnificent Monument was erected to his memory.

'Tis a History of many curious, very interesting and extraordinary Events, some highly exalted Characters and powerful excitements to Virtue.



E X O D U S,

O R

E M I G R A T I O N.

THIS wonderful Prodigy, or rather this series of Prodigies, the Delivery of the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, is said to be mentioned no less than a thousand times in the Old Testament, and is throughout held up to view, as the most astonishing proof of the Patronage and Power of Almighty God.

The Book of Exodus commences with a list of the Family of Jacob, who first accepted the King's Invitation, and took up their Residence in Egypt
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at the time of the Famine—Children and Grand-children, only, of that Patriarch.

By comparing so small a Root with the immense Multitude which sprang from it, you will witness the wonderful Providence of God fulfilling all his Promises.

The book proceeds on with the Historian's own Birth, and you have here related, the very curious Plot laid for his Preservation, a Providential contrivance, introductory to his liberal education in all the wisdom and learning of the East.

AMRAM, his Father, viewed with Horror, the cruel Edict Pharoah had issued out, that every Hebrew Male Child which should be born, be cast into the River Nile and there drowned either by the Parents or the Egyptian Task-master, and He was much the more distressed, as he every day expected the birth of another Child; whilst Amram was devoutly pleading with God, it was revealed to him, that the Israelites should shortly be freed from their oppressive yoke, and that his son, now about to be born, should be the glorious instrument of their Deliverance. Amram therefore carefully concealed him three months he was at that time under the sad necessity of ex-

posing

posing him, as is here most entertainingly told with a minute, curious and interesting detail of incidents, wonderfully coinciding, and all tending to his preservation and future destiny.

THE Providence of God conducts a Princess, in her evening walk to the River side, she saw the rushy cradle floating up and down, and spied the little beauty, lovely, innocent and in tears, so exposed to danger (which it never knew), she was all Pity and Admiration, rescues herself the child, adopts it as her own, unknowingly hires its Mother for its wet nurse, orders them all to the Palace, and brings him up under the first Masters, the learned Magi, and all the high education and advantages of a Court.

GOD in due time appeared to Moses encircled in a flame of fire representing a burning Bush. Moses stepped aside, and stood wondering the Bush was not consumed. God here condescendingly called to him by name, Moses, Moses, and he answers, Lord, here am I, (God now speaks again)—“ I am the God of thy Fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. Abashed and fore affraid, Moses hid his face: a most awful and highly interesting parly and interview ending in electing him Deliverer, Leader, and Head over Israel.

MOSES

MOSES thus signally invested, enters upon his high office, and accompanied by his Brother Aaron, God commissions him to go to the Egyptian Court, then the most splendid Court in all the World, and demand the Release of his Countrymen. God reveals to Moses that haughty Monarch's obstinacy and refusal, and the miraculous means He would employ to rescue them from his tyranny.

TEN very wonderful Miracles are minutely recorded, and at last the Egyptian Prince did give orders for their departure—but his heart relented, furiously he pursued them, and himself with all his host, were every one of them drowned: for God, in order to give his People an undeniable proof of his Patronage and Power, opened a passage through the Red Sea, having purposely led them that way to the wilderness of Etham. The Israelites walked through as on dry ground; Pharoah and his Army by rashly venturing to pursue them, were every one of them lost.

God commanded Moses, and he waved his Rod over the mighty Waters; a fierce East Wind dried up the Sea, and the Waters rose a heap, a Wall on the right hand and on the left; in the Morning Watch just at Day-break, Pharoah and his Chariots

Chariots and his Horsemen almost came up to them, just on their setting foot on the other Shore. Moses waved his Rod again over the Sea; the Waters resumed their wonted Channel, and covered all the Pursuers; none, no not one of them, escaped: the dead Carcases floated on the Sea and they covered the shore.

MOSES was so encouraged and elated with this so signal a Miracle and deliverance, that in a Song of Triumph, high Sublimity and the boldest Figures, he indulges himself in transports and bursts of joy and gratitude. This memorable Event, together with the safe Passage of the Israelites, was ever after commemorated in an abiding Sacrament called the Passover.

According to the dying request of JOSEPH, the Israelites had collected his bones, and carefully carried them through all their wanderings; they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, on the borders of the Wilderness; their Guide, a bright Cloud moved on before them all the day (and to render it more visible), it was illuminated by Night.

“ Throughout their whole Journey he took not away the Cloud by Day, nor the Pillar of Fire by Night.”

While

While they were here encamped, JETHRO the Midian Priest, Moses' Father-in-law, overtook them, and he brought with him Moses' Wife, and his two Sons; and Jethro made a great Feast, and invited all the Princes of Israel, a general Joy on the Success of their Rescue, and his Son Moses' new Government. Moses sat as Judge from Morning untill Night, instructing and counselling his People, and at Jethro's persuasion he now made choice of some of the wisest of his Elders to assist him.

Important Revelations were made to the Israelites in the Wilderness.

Three Months after they set out they arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai, the highest and most inaccessible Mountain in the East, and held sacred by all the Inhabitants around;—here the Israelites halted, they assembled at the foot and beheld the Mountain all on Fire, surrounded with blackness and darkness and tempest, they heard the awful Voice of God pronounce the Eternal Law, thus impressively stamping it on their Minds and Memories for ever.

The Original Laws of Morality and Equity, revealed to the Conscience, and impressed on the
 Q Heart,

Heart, defaced and forgot, were now wrote on Tables of Stone, and thus awfully restored to the Jews, and institutions were added by Moses, grateful acknowledgments of past deliverances, and powerful checks to the torrent of Vice and Impiety, expressly designed to fix inviolable Barriers between the Jews and the Idolatrous Nations around them.

You have here the best system and code of Laws ever exhibited, and they were ever after the standing Municipal Laws of the Israelites. Our Saviour expressly calls the book "The Book of Moses," reverences the Jewish Laws, and quotes no less than five and twenty passages out of Exodus.

This Book relates a series of Wonders, and is a History highly entertaining and instructive. A miraculous Rescue from the Tyranny of Pharaoh and the Land of Egypt, where they had at first been invited as Guests, but now long treated as Rebels and Slaves, inured to oppression and bondage.

It contains the Transactions of one hundred and forty-five years, and many of these Events are confirmed by the Testimony of Heathen Writers.

Some

Some of its Prophecies were accomplished in the life-time of Moses; their Rescue* and Deliverance: Others were fulfilled soon after his death, as the Conquest of Canaan, Division and Allotment of the Land, subsequent Revolutions, Subjections and Captivity.

Towards the latter end you will read God's express Command, reverentially to keep Holy the Sabbath†: and God condescendingly reasons with His people, and fixes the Observance of it, a perpetual Sign to subsist between Him and his People for ever.

The Book concludes with Directions how to form the Ark and Tabernacle; the Consecration of it, the Ceremonies of Anointing Aaron, and his Sons, their Purification, and the new and superb Dresses with which they were henceforward to be adorned and distinguished by: A very solemn and perpetual Election, an everlasting Priesthood confined to his Family, throughout their generations.

The Ark was constructed, and a Veil to cover it all over; a Tent was assigned it, after which

* Chapter the seventh. † Chapter the thirty-second.

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the visible appearance of the Glory of God filled the Tabernacle in which it was deposited, and it always regulated their stay, directed them when they were to renew their March and pursue their Journey, a Cloud by Day, a Fire by Night.

When this Cloud majestically rose above the Tent and became visible over it, Israel's standing Orders were to march forward under the Protection and good Guidance of their God.



LEVITICUS.

LAWS and REGULATIONS

of the PRIESTS.

A BOOK which takes its Name from the Patriarch LEVI, and relates the Functions and Religious Ceremonies of the Levites, who were male descendants of Levi, and ministerial Assistants and principal Agents in the Sacrifices and Services of the Sanctuary.

It contains many Promises and Threatnings, excitements to Virtue, and to a strict observance of the Laws: It explains the Nature of the Jewish Priesthood, the superb Dresses they were henceforward to be distinguished by, and their high Honours and Dignity. It establishes their Civil Economy and the Divine legation of Moses.

The first seven Chapters are Directions and Duties enjoined the Priests; Aaron's Consecration

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tion and his Son's are related in the eighth, and the Habits described with which Moses himself dressed them : Most splendid and significant was the High Priest's ; a gorgeous Mitre and a plate of Gold called the Holy Crown, a rich flowing Robe and over it a breast-plate of Gold, and the Emblems of Light and Perfection called Urim and Thummim. When thus magnificently attired, in the subsequent Chapters many Offices and Employments are assigned him. In the tenth you are struck with the awful History of Nadab and Abihu, Aarons' two Sons, who were struck dead at the Altar, imprudently offering Incense with common Fire, instead of that which was to fall from Heaven. Aaron was sorely distressed, but he held his peace, silently witnessing the Sovereignty and Justice of God, vindicating his Honour and enforcing Obedience to his Laws ; in a public and exemplary manner punishing an open and scandalous violation and breach, by those who should have been strict Observers and Assertors of them. Aaron, and his other Sons, were yet officiating, and Moses in order to prevent a stop to the Ceremonies and Holy Functions, called to him Michael and Elzaphan, two young men, and ordered them to remove the bodies, and bury them just as they were, without stripping off any part of the dress.

In the Sixteenth Chapter a yearly solemn Feast is enjoined the whole Nation, to be an everlasting Statue, an annual Attonement for the Sins of the People.

Prohibitions and Precepts, Laws and Directions are continued on to the twenty-fifth, where a remarkable Prophecy is recorded, and its regular constant Accomplishment afforded the Israelites a standing Miracle, and most convincing proof of the divine Inspiration of their Lawgiver: "I will command my Blessing on you in the sixth Year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three Years, and ye shall sow the eighth Year, and eat yet of the old Fruit until the ninth Year; until her Fruits come in, ye shall eat of the old Store." This regularly came to pass, and as long as the Law was revered, an ample Supply and Provision was made for the Sabbatic year. Besides this, every fiftieth year was to be a Jubilee, when every Israelite of every denomination, was commanded, in the most public manner, to sound his Trumpet nine several times, and proclaim "Liberty! — Liberty!" — throughout all the Land. Freedom to all Servants and Slaves,—A Release to the Poor of all Debts, and a Restoration to their Possessions and former Inheritance.

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The Land too was to enjoy Rest, they were neither to sow, nor reap, nor put up into Barns any overplus whatever, though it grew luxuriant and spontaneous. Many advantages arose to the Israelites from this wise Institution. Ambition was prudently restrained, an Estate never went out of a man's family; those who had been sold, returned now every Man to his own House; Public tranquility and undisturbed possession was a necessary consequence, and a promise of unbounded prosperity was announced as a reward and an encouragement to fidelity.

The last year of our Saviour's Life, was the year of Jubilee, and the last the Jews ever kept; for from the seventh year after their entrance into Canaan, there were just 1400 years to the thirty-third of Our Saviour's Life, which gives just twenty-eight Jubilees.

The second year from their departure out of Egypt this Book is said to have been delivered to them by Moses, in the year of the World 2524.

It contains only the actions of one Month, and pronounces blessings on all those who observe its Precepts and a most awful curse on the Transgressor.

N U M B E R S.

ON THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

THIS Book takes its Name from the many numberings reported in it, and the first is very remarkable; the Men of War from twenty years old and upwards, in the second year from their leaving Egypt, amounted to six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty, besides Levites. The eight first Chapters contain further Directions and additional Laws for the Priests and the Sanctuary, and afterwards an Account of the Spies sent out as Searchers to discover the Land of Canaan. The remaining part of the Book carries on their History and Journey, Travels, Troubles, Murmurings and Rebellions, their Sufferings, Streights and Enlargements, Dangers and Deliverances, Conquests and Notable things they did or suffered during the space of thirty-nine years, wherein they rather wandered than regularly journeyed in the Desert,

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their

their Vices, Obstinacy and Rebellion, keeping them back from the borders of Canaan, when they were very near, almost in possession of it. In the eleventh Chapter their murmurings are severely reprov'd, and very many are destroyed by Lightning. To assist Moses in his arduous task of Government, seventy Elders are now elected, and they have their different Offices allotted them.

The Israelites had long murmured and sigh'd for fish, and onions, and leeks, a savoury and very cheap food among them. God was displeas'd with their ingratitude and complainings, and sent them so very great a profusion of Quails that they covered the ground two cubits high around all their Camps, but the murmurers were very shortly afterwards all destroyed by a Pestilence.

In the twelfth Chapter Miriam and Aaron's sedition is related, and Miriam's punishment: she was instantly led out from the Camp a Leper as white as snow. In the sixteenth Chapter the conspiracy and rebellion of Korah is awfully punished with an Earthquake. The thirteenth and fourteenth Chapters record the Names, Instructions and Acts of the Spies sent to inspect the Land of Canaan, together with the People's
ungrateful

ungrateful murmurings, and the threatnings of God for their disobedience. The seventeenth appropriates the High Priesthood to the family of Aaron by a very signal Miracle, the blossoming of Aaron's Rod; after such a warning and prohibition no one would dare usurp the Priesthood. The death both of Miriam and Aaron are recorded in the twentieth, and the manner in which Aaron was first divested of his dignity and priestly Habits, the Ensigns of his Office. Moses, and Eleazar, Aaron's Son, accompanied the High Priest up a high Mountain named Hor, and there, in the sight of all the People, Aaron stripped off his priestly Robes, and put them himself upon his Son. At the age of ninety-three Aaron here died, and they buried him on the Mountain and on the spot he died.

The Israelites were now encamped in the desert of Zin, and almost famished for want of Water: On Moses' application to God, he was commanded to strike the Rock with his Rod, and instantly the waters gushed out in great abundance for them and all their Cattle.

The twenty-first Chapter relates sundry Journeys and fresh murmurings; the People cry out " We shall die in the Wilderness, there is no Bread, there is no Water, our Soul loath-

eth this light bread :” Such distrust and upbraidings displeased God, and He withdrew from them his extraordinary Providence ; and fiery Serpents, a most pernicious Plague in that Desert, but hitherto kept from hurting them, stung the Israelites so distressfully that many of them died. On Moses’ Prayer for his People, the mischief was very shortly removed. God commanded Moses to erect on a high pole the figure of a brazen Serpent; on which every one who had been bit might look up to, and obtain a Cure. A circumstance and reference alluded to by our Saviour, and very strikingly applied.

This Chapter is elegantly enlivened by two beautiful Odes ; one a Song of the Children of Israel, and the other a Song of Triumph, by an Amorite bard on a Conquest over Moab : The former joyously exults on a seasonable supply of Water God had kindly sent them before they asked it ; and the latter is a pleasing and very ancient Ode, abounding with lofty metaphors and is only introduced here to shew that this Country belonged to the Amorites, and not the Moabites, when the Israelites subdued it.

In the twenty-second is recorded the miracu-

John 3. 14. 15.

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ious Speech of Balaam's Ass. Balaam was a Prophet, although a heathen and an immoral Man. He came from Amram among the Mountaneous parts of the East, and exhibited a strange mixture of Divination, Enchantments, and Prophecy, but Balaam in those days, was held in such high Repute, that Balak King of Moab, and the Princes of Midian came from very distant Countries, and would fain have brought him back with them, to utter a curse upon Israel.

Very singular and exprefs are the Prophecies of Balaam. "A star shall come out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the Children of Sheth. Israel shall do valiantly."

In the twenty-fifth Chapter Israel's licentiousness and Idolatry are punished by a Pestilence; no less than four and twenty thousand of the People are destroyed, and Zimri a ringleader, for a lawless and open act of Infamy was murdered on the spot, together with Cozbi his confederate, though she was a Princess of the House of Moab. In the twenty-sixth Israel is again numbered, and notwithstanding the late awful destruction, they amounted to 601,730. Amongst these the Land of Canaan was ordered to be divided.

Soon

Soon after this Moses was informed by God that he should die, and that He had appointed Joshua his General to succeed him in his Government : Undisturbed at the awful Summons, and feeling no terror at the near approach and solemn exchange, Moses busily employed every moment in transmitting down, throughout the remaining Chapters, the Laws of God, and the Duties of Life ; impressing them most strenuously on the Minds of the People, and he gave to Joshua and Eleazar the High Priest, his last directions respecting the division of the Land among the Twelve Tribes by lot ; appointing the Six Cities of Refuge for the Manslayer, and allotting the spoils they had already acquired. The Israelites in this Book are conducted into the Land of Canaan.



ON THE BOOK OF
DEUTERONOMY

OR
REPETITION.

THIS Name signifies the second Law. It is a Recapitulation of all the former History, and Moses wrote it only two Months before he died.

He had already published his Book of Genealogy, two others of their Travels, and a Code of Laws and Regulations for the Priests. He had toiled long and laboured hard to root out their prejudices, obstinacy, and ingratitude; and now just on the point of leaving them. He presents them

them with a Manual of Instructions, and bequeaths it for general use; Precepts and Laws, Civil, Religious, and Military, a testimony of his Love, and his last Blessing and Legacy to his People. He was acquainted with their tempers, well knew of what spirits they were of, and he winningly encourages some, and others he alarms by his threats, devoutly praying for all that God would guide and bless his People.

By the most pathetic and forcible motives, the Virtues of Piety, Justice, Charity, Humanity and Fortitude are all inculcated. With fervent zeal Moses invokes the People devoutly to worship God. He recounts the amazing wonders God had already wrought for Israel, his many and glorious Promises to the obedient, together with his most awful denunciations against the transgressor.

This most excellent Code of Laws, both Civil and Religious, were ever after the standing Municipal Laws of the Israelites. At a very short distance of time, God had commanded Moses to ascend a high Mountain called Nebo, and from thence he was permitted to take a view of the Promised Land. He is now further informed he should shortly die, and on that very spot. With perfect serenity and composure Moses received the

the awful news, and notwithstanding the Summons, he zealously goes on pursuing the duties of Life, the great business allotted him. Undisturbed by the terrors of the exchange, Moses continues transmitting down to his People the Laws of God, of Life and Eternity; settling the Moral, Civil, and Religious system he was earnestly explaining and enforcing.

He had experienced many hardships, much fatigue, and suffered many mortifications from the ignorance, the obstinacy, the frequent murmurings and dissatisfaction of the People. At the close of life, Moses seems to have had more enlightened prospects of futurity, and he hoped to meet a peaceful slumber in the grave. He had no Ambition to gratify, no wish that his Dignities and Honours should descend to his Children; but was well satisfied with the appointment of Joshua, who had long been his General and his Servant. He busily employed every moment in adjusting the concerns of his Government; and his first care was, in the most public and solemn manner, to express his approbation and confirm the settlement to his successor, lest any of his own family should afterwards oppose it. Moses assembled all the Tribes of Israel, the Elders, Magistrates and Rulers, and before them all, he laid his hand upon Joshua

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presented

presented him himself to the High Priest for Consecration, zealously commanded him, in cases of all difficulty and emergence whatever, to address himself to God. Moses then ordered them to blow up the trumpets, and proclaim him throughout the Camp, Head, Leader and Chief over Israel.

So much in possession of himself, and enjoying a peaceful calm, Moses sat down and composed a Commemorative Hymn, pathetically exhorting his People to consider their latter end, and it opens with inimitable beauty, arresting your attention with surprise, and then goes on with sweet and familiar similes, referring you to the invigorating effects of the soft Shower and dropping Dew, and applying the sentiment to his Song in softening the Heart and making it fruitful. The elegant attestation to the praise of God, in the fourth verse, is used by the Jews, a funeral Ode at their burials.

Moses lived to see the total overthrow of the Midianites, and he divided all their spoils. One half he allotted to the Conquerors, and one half to those who staid at home, excepting one fifteenth part of the whole, which he gave to the Levites and Priests.

As the Israelites were on the eve of entering on the

the Promised Land, Moses' Address was wonderfully encouraging and excited all their attention;

"Hear O Israel,—Thou art this day to pass over Jordan, and encounter with Nations greater and mightier than thyself; Cities fenced up to Heaven; a People huge and tall; but know ye that the Lord thy God He goeth before thee, as a consuming fire shall He destroy them."

After this he appointed the exact limits they were first to conquer, and affixed the distributions by lot, committing the whole care of it to Joshua and Eleazar the High Priest, before the Heads and Chiefs of Israel. Moses named the forty-eight Cities allotted to the Tribe of Levi, and the six Cities of Refuge, where the Manslayer was to fly, and three he named on this side and three on the other side Jordan,

So fully convinced were the Israelites of the Divine Original of their Laws, and such their respect and veneration for their Lawgiver, that no one Tribe for many ages ever encroached on the limits of another. As his end drew nigh, Moses was very solicitous to finish well his very arduous task. He had now attained to the age of one hundred and twenty; his sight perfect and his strength

unimpaired : He for the last time gathered all the Tribes about him, drops the character of the Historian and addresses himself to his People, affectionately pronouncing his last farewell and solemn blessing on every separate Tribe apart, and in language the strongest, most eloquent, and divinely Prophetic.

The Preface and Conclusion of these his last and dying words, is couched in a stile enkindling the flame of devotion. Kings were directed to write for themselves a Copy, and read it every day ; it was to be engraven on stones, and placed on every high-way, it was to be carried with them over Jordan, to be solemnly read every seventh year, in the hearing of all the People of Israel, purposely convened and assembled.

Attended by Joshua and Eleazar the High Priest to the foot of the Mountain, where they took a sorrowful and affectionate leave, Moses went up the hill alone, in full possession of his Powers and Faculties, his eyes not dim, nor his natural force abated ; he died at the age of one hundred and twenty.

Moses was highly honoured as a Prophet, with whom God spake Mouth to Mouth.—A Divine Lawgiver, the founder of their civil and religious
 Polity

Polity—invested with the power of performing Miracles; and he exercised it at the Egyptian Court, over the mighty Waters, and in the Wilderness—he fed this immense multitude, day by day, and the plenty left, was of itself a miracle—faithful in all his house—open and generous in his temper—admirably blending fortitude with meekness—pious, wise, and zealous for God—unweariedly laborious, a Father to his People, preferring affliction with them to the treasures of Egypt—so unambitious and disinterested; as to appoint a stranger to his Government, to the exclusion of his own family. Amazing were his Powers, as a Poet, an Historian, a Legislator and a Statesman.

This faithful, highly favoured Servant of God, had been wonderfully protected in infancy and child-hood, adopted by a Princess, amidst the luxury of an Egyptian Court, liberally educated in all the learning of the East, elected to his high honours at the voice of God, blessed with daily intercourse, the most winning condescension and familiar converse with Him, as friend with friend—admitted to immediate access. Did his People want Water, the dry rock poured them out rivers; did they want Food, He sent it them down from Heaven; were they naked, He clothed-

ad them all; His presence filled the Tabernacle, He sat upon the Mercy Seat, authorising their stay, and in a bright cloud, majestically rose, and became visible above the Tent, when Moses and his People, were to march forwards, under the safe guidance and protection of God; did his People rebel, pestilence or devouring flames consumed the murmurers, or an earthquake swallowed them up; one, encircled in the highest dignities, for unjust reflections on Moses and his family, walked from the Camp a loathsome Leper, disgracefully polluted and forlorn; did they encounter with powerful enemies, He fought their battles, the Lord of their Hosts, the God of the Army's of Moses; a wise and able Tutor, he employed his life in instructing them, divesting his People of prejudice, and training them up for the Promised Land; at its borders only, Moses arrived, God here informed him he should die; undisturbed by the summons, with fortitude and zeal, he kept handing down the laws of life, explaining its duties, and enforcing his precepts, By sound of trumpet, Moses proclaimed his successor, presented him himself to Eleazar, and after a tender greeting, and most affectionate leave at the foot of the Mount, he ascended the hill, was permitted only a bare sight of Canaan, after which

which Moses died. Thus he lived with God on earth, and was so peaceably taken home.

A character of such glorious pre-eminence and unwearied assiduity for the public good, will be revered, highly honored and beloved for ever.

Israel wept for Moses, on the plains of Moab thirty days, and there arose no Prophet since in Israel, like to Moses, whom God knew face to face.



E S S A Y V.
ON THE BOOK OF
J O S H U A.

JOSHUA, this distinguished Hero and highly celebrated General, was the Son of Nun, and appointed by God, successor to Mose's; Head Leader and Chief over Israel: and was again by sound of trumpet proclaimed throughout the Camp, on the plains of Moab, his new territories and acquisition.

After a speech of Joshua's, in which he officially informed the Israelites of the intended division of the Land of Canaan among the Twelve Tribes, and particularized the Lands allotted to Reuben and Gad, and to one half of the Tribe of Manasseh, not only the Heads of these Tribes, but the Elders and Leaders of all the People, eagerly

eagerly concurring with the divine appointment, came up in a body to Joshua, and swore allegiance to him.

“ We solemnly engage to pay the same Obedience to thee, we paid to Moses :—God bless and prosper thee, as He did Moses.”

Joshua had lived high in the esteem of his Commander, and he was revered and beloved by the People. He had long been Head, General and Chief over all the Forces of Israel ; and he was one of the twelve deputed by Moses to examine the Promised Land as to its soil, fruitfulness, inhabitants, and fortifications ; the report he made, widely differed from the report given in by ten out of the twelve, sent on the same embassy, and it gained him much credit and the confidence and respect of his Commander.

During almost all the journey and wanderings in the Wilderness, Joshua had been trained up by Moses, an eye-witness to the wonderful works God had wrought for Israel, and he had been instructed in the genius and disposition of the People, the land and its inhabitants, which he was now preparing to enter with his very numerous host, and of which he had already given in

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a faithful detail and account recorded in their register : Thus Joshua seemed highly qualified for the important and very interesting duties and honours allotted him.

Well apprised of the many difficulties and dangers before him, under so very arduous an undertaking, nothing could have supported Joshua but reliance on God, and he now received more and very express and signal promises of divine protection and assistance ; the most animating encouragement, directions and assurances of conquest :—

“ As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee ;
 “ be strong, be of good courage, fear not, nor
 “ be thou dismayed, the Lord thy God is with
 “ thee whithersoever thou goest.”

The original edict was, “ From the Wilder-
 “ nefs and this Lebanon, even unto the great
 “ river, the river Euphrates, all the Land of the
 “ Hittites, and unto the great Sea, towards the go-
 “ ing down of the Sun shall be your coast ; every
 “ place between that, and which the sole of your
 “ foot shall tread on, that have I given unto you.”

At the death of Moses, the Israelites were en-
 camped at Shittim, on the banks of the river Jor-
 dan,

dan, in full view of Canaan, and here it was they mourned one whole month for their General. The People He had so unweariedly instructed, and so wisely governed, were grown more tractable and more fully persuaded of the good guidance and protection of their God ; they were now only waiting for a signal from their new General, and their orders to pass over Jordan.

Joshua had dispatched three Expresses to the Canaanites. The first gave leave for all those to depart who chose it ; the second were articles of Peace, to those who would make Peace ; the third was a declaration of War to those who refused. He saw himself indeed at the head of six hundred thousand fighting men, completely furnished with arms, which they had procured from Egypt, the Amalekites, their new conquests, and others ; but he was clogged with a number of old men, women, children, servants and cattle : The very first step he was to take, was to cross over this immense river, and at this season it was in its full swell, and overflowed its banks ; the crossing over he well knew exposed him to the arms of those he was attacking, as well as to those enemies he left behind, the countries of Sihon and Og which they had only lately conquered. The Canaanites themselves were a warlike People of gigantic sta-

ture ; their Cities walled, strongly fortified by nature and art ; all the interests of the several Nations and all their Forces united by the firmest alliance, self-preservation, almost self-existence : They had long taken the alarm, had made all the preparations in their power to oppose his design, fiercely resolved to obstruct his entrance, oppose his conquest, or die.

Joshua now selected out two very bold and confidential Servants, sent them very privily away to Jericho, the first City on the other side, about eight miles from Jordan ; they crossed and travelled all night, when they came near Jericho they found the Inhabitants fully apprised of their danger, on the watch, and all in arms ; it was with great difficulty they could conceal themselves, by promises, oaths, stratagem, and art, they did luckily escape from a window, in the house of one Rahab, a harlot, situated on the Town-wall ; she, at dead of night, had let them down herself by means of a scarlet cord, and they had fled to the mountains ; the two men got back the third day, told of the amazing risks they had run, and they begun with the whole history of their reception, by Rahab, as soon as she knew who they were, at the hazard of her life, she was resolved to protect them, and her whole plot and contrivance

vance is wonderfully artful; she whispered to them, I know the Lord has given you the Land, the Town is in an uproar, all the People frightened and fainting; we were told of your crossing the Sea, and your slaughter of the Amorites; but what a danger ye yourselves are in; so she led them up to the roof of her house, a place where she dried her flax, and covered them all over with the stalks: the rumour soon spread, two men had crossed over Jordan, they were already in the City, now at Rahab's house; the King instantly sent to seize them; Rahab said, indeed two men had been there, they were gone, just at dusk before the shutting of the gates both went away; send quickly, you will soon overtake them. The King dispatched his Guard in haste, and fastened up his gates. Rahab now went up to the two men with her story, and made with them a league for her family; she had neither husband nor child, but she had father and mother, and sisters and brothers; and she says:

“ Swear to me when you take possession of the
 “ City, ye will save my kindred alive, and all that
 “ I have, give me now a token; and the men said:

“ Our life for yours; we give ours in security
 “ for yours.”

Rahab

Rahab giving them food, let them down herself by a scarlet cord from the window, on the outside of the Town-wall, and she said :

“ Haste ye to the mountain, hide yourselves till the pursuers are returned, then get ye home.”

The men now told her :

“ When you draw up the scarlet cord, tie it acrofs and acrofs your window, that we may be certain of knowing your house.”

Rahab joyfully obeyed, delighted to have always in her eye the pledge of her safety and deliverance. The two men had dwelt much on the terror, alarm, and consternation of King and People, high and low ; this intelligence Joshua took up, this he said was greatly in their favour, a sure omen of their future success, God had struck all their enemies with terror, and Joshua in the highest spirits emboldens and encourages them all :

“ Fight ye valiantly under my banner, and the protection of God.”

Joshua instantly blew the Trumpets for War throughout all the Camp : He informed them in three days time they should all pass over
Jordan,

Jordan, and he commanded them to lay in a store of Provisions, and be all in readiness to march; the usual Food of the Israelites was Manna, on their approach to the Promised Land that Food decreased, and such as their new Conquests afforded, Joshua ordered them now to collect, as the Manna was totally to cease as soon as ever they set foot on the opposite shore, and this it actually did.

To inspire his Army with reverential awe and still greater regard to this very extraordinary expedition, Joshua commanded all his People to sanctify themselves as on public, national, and very solemn occasions: He then directed each Tribe to chuse out, and depute to him a trusty Man, to hold himself in readiness to execute such orders as should be given him on the morrow.

On Friday the thirtieth of April, in the year of the World, 2554 the Priests in their proper Dresses and Habits, bearing the Ark, began their march towards the banks of the River, Joshua divided his People into two Columns, ordering them to stand in readiness to follow, the one was, after they came to the Water edge to proceed before the Ark, and the rest

rest were directed to follow it: As soon as the Priests bearing the Ark had with their feet touched the Water on the Bank, the Waters to the right hand and to the left receded, and rose up in heaps like Walls opening a passage of no less than sixteen miles in breadth to the Israelites, till they were all passed over: God thus miraculously signalizing their new Commander, in the manner he had signalized Moses in passing through the Red Sea: In the midst of the River, the Priest bearing the Ark stood still, and they there halted till all the Tribes had set foot on the opposite Coast, waiting there the orders of Joshua to join the rest of the Camp: The twelve Men one of which had been deputed by each Tribe, were now summoned before Joshua, and He directed them to bring to him twelve very large Stones, one for each Tribe, and fix them up in one huge heap, on the spot where the Ark had stopped, and they were to place them so high, that when the swell of the Waters should be abated, they might there be seen; and from the bottom of the River, he commanded them to chuse out twelve more large Stones, and to build with them a Monument on the Shore, in order to perpetuate the Memory of so miraculous and very wonderful a Passage

sage over this immensely wide and rapid Stream : Joshua after this ordered the Priests to move forwards and depofite the Ark on the Shore : It was immediately on their fetting it down, that the Waters refumed their ufual courfe and channel.

Joshua impressed by the goodnefs of God, in this glorious difplay of his Power, fo fignally honouring him on this his firft entrance into Canaan, led on his Valiant Troops thus highly infpirited to the plains of Jericho, and He pitched his Camp about three or four miles only, from the City.

God was here pleafed to manifefit Himfelf to Joshua in a very extraordinary manner, by an Angel on the plain : The Angel affumed the figure of a Warrior, and he held a drawn Sword in his hand : Joshua was alone, reconnoitring the City ; at a fight fo unexpected, Joshua started back ; as foon as He could collect himfelf, Joshua refpectfully enquired if he was for Ifrael, and the Angel answered—I am Captain of the Lord's Hoft. Joshua fell on his face and worfhipped—after which He humbly asked, what orders He had for his Servant : the Angel informed Joshua, His prefence had confecrated the place—loofe now thy Shoe from off thy foot, the fpot thou
V standeft

standest on, is holy : Joshua instantly obeyed, and he was now made acquainted with the most wonderful siege, and surrender of Jericho, by which God was pleased most evidently to shew the Canaanites, it was not an Arm of flesh that fought against them.

Joshua was the General who conquered the Amalekites, and by a signal and very famous Victory, opened a passage for the Israelites, to Mount Sinai; it was a few days before his death Moses had confirmed him his Successor, to the exclusion of his own children and family, laid his hands upon him in the presence of the Elders and People purposely convened, presented him himself to the High Priest for solemn consecration, and proclaimed him throughout all the Tribes, Head, Leader and Chief over Israel : With his numerous host, Joshua had now encountered his first difficulty, crossed this wide and rapid River, entered Canaan, and the populous City of Jericho, the first to the Westward over Jordan was miraculously delivered into his hands, for its strong walls and all its fortifications, ramparts and towers fell down while Joshua and his Army were surrounding it. The City of Jericho was burnt to the ground, and its numerous Inhabitants all put to the Sword; but Rahab was remembered, and
Joshua

Joshua called to him the two men, whom she at the hazard of her life had protected; and He said:

“ Go ye and bring out thence, the woman, and
“ all that she hath as ye sware unto her:”

And the two men led her out, and her father and mother, and all her kindred, and placed them by themselves without the Camp, and there they stayed, and were all cleansed, and became Proselytes and Jewish converts: They were so particular, that they left Rahab's House standing, and the part of the wall on which it was built; thus signally recognizing the promise and the performance. Rahab was afterwards more distinguishingly rewarded, she became the wife of Naasson, an illustrious Prince and Chief of all his Tribe, and shone a virtuous Character and a Jewish Princess.

After the Conquest of Jericho, this signal and miraculous display of Almighty Power, affording Joshua and the Israelites the most animating encouragement, and a footing in the Country; Joshua pursued his Victories, conquered many other Cities and Kingdoms, took possession of the Land, and as the Tribes of Reuben and Gad, and one half of the Tribe of Manasseh were already provided for on the other side Jordan;

Joshua divided those on this side among the ten Tribes, and the remaining half Tribe of Manasseh, by lot.

The progress He made in subduing the Canaanites, his astonishing Successes are here minutely related with many artful pieces of generalship, which exhibit much Skill, Military prowess, and the most undaunted Courage and Intrepidity : The Inhabitants of Canaan had filled up the measure of their Iniquity, were most abominably wicked, and God chose to punish them by an utter destruction. Such were the standing orders of the Israelites, highly awful and peremptory. The Disgrace and public execution of the Kings (for every City had its King) was intended by Joshua, to strike a Terror in the Nations around, who seeing such spirit and bravery accompanied with firmness and awful severity, might be inclined to make less resistance, and be more easily subdued : Joshua therefore sat in Judgment himself, upon the Kings, and he assembled his Captains and Men of War and He said :

“ Put ye your feet upon the necks of these
 “ Kings, thus will God subdue your Enemies,
 “ thus tread them under your feet, fear not ye,
 “ nor be ye dismayed, be strong, and of good
 “ courage :”

Al-

After this spirited Address, Joshua smote the Kings, and slew them, and hung up their bodies from morning to night, as a brand of infamy, and objects of terror.

The People were more and more attached to Joshua, and He became more and more dreaded by the Canaanites : to avoid his Victorious Arms, they fled from their Cities, some into Asia, others into Africa, and facilitated the Conquest of the Country : Much was completed in less than seven years, and the division made amongst the Tribes by lot ; the Territories of Timnath-serah, on the mountain of Ephraim, were unanimously allotted to Joshua, by the voice of all the People ; there he built a City, made it his chief place of Residence and where he kept his Court.

Six Cities of Refuge were also chosen from out of the forty-two, which had been settled on the Tribe of Levi ; they were to protect the Innocent in cases of involuntary homicide only, for the wilful Murderer was to be torn even from the horns of the Altar, and instantly put to death.

After Joshua had settled himself in peace, and established Regularity and good Government, Civil and Religious ; He here himself records the many glorious Victories he had obtained, and by becoming

becoming his own Historian, fought his battles over again, and took a review of his many wonderful Exploits, and the Safety and protection God had unweariedly afforded him. He then goes on relating some very miraculous interpositions where-with God had signally favoured him; among many others, one was a very wonderful prolongation of day-light astonishingly advantageous and tending gloriously to his Success, when the Sun and the Moon stood still at the voice of the Leader of Israel.

The tutelary Deities of the Canaanites, whom they worshipped, were the Sun and Moon; the former they called Baal or Moloch; and the latter Ashtoreth; they must therefore have been convinced in a most striking manner, and in their own way, that the Gods in whom they trusted, were subject to, and under the immediate controul of the God of Israel: To impress the stronger on their minds the Majesty and Power of Jehovah, Joshua spake in presence of both Armies, and in sight of all Israel, and He said:

“ Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon.” And the Moon stayed and the Sun stood still a whole day, and hastened not to go down. In the ancient Chinese records some notice is taken of the



the Sun and Moon being stayed a whole day by Joshua.

Another famous Miracle stands here recorded ; a fall of large hailstones during an engagement, destructive only to the Enemy, and many more are said to have died by them than by the sword.

After his settlement and division of the Land amongst the twelve Tribes, Joshua maintained his Government seventeen years, and he had been Elected and Proclaimed four and twenty ; finding his life drawing near a close, He assembled all the Tribes individually, together with all their Heads, Elders and Magistrates, on the spacious Plains of Sechem, near the spot where they had deposited the bones of Joseph, which they had brought with them out of Egypt ; and here, in an animated and encouraging, yet most pathetic Speech Joshua addressed his People, minutely and distinctly He recognized the many wonders God had wrought for Israel, and their miraculous Deliverances ; inspiring them with Courage to finish what he had successfully begun, to drive out the Canaanites and possess the Land, kindly cautioning them,

“ See ye that ye mention not even the name
 “ of their Gods, cleave ye to the Lord, He it is
 “ who

“ who fighteth for Israel, the Lord your God :
“ Who among all the Nations hath been able to
“ stand before you ? One man of you shall
“ chase a thousand ; only take heed that ye love
“ the Lord your God, and keep his Statutes :
“ enter into no alliances with the Nations around,
“ you, they will prove snares and traps to you,
“ scourges in your side, and thorns in your eyes,
“ and ye will surely perish from off this good
“ Land flowing with milk and honey, ease and
“ plenty and sweetness, and wander again (ye
“ known not whither) in deserts and the Wilder-
“ nefs exposed to dangers, weariness, and want.”

The howling Wilderneys instantly brought back to their minds their long, tedious and miserable journey, upon which this wise Prince, winningly enforces his Speech with the pathetic, artfully insinuating and full of conviction.

“ Behold, this day I am going the way of all
“ the Earth, now therefore I pray you fear the
“ Lord, serve him in sincerity and truth : But if
“ it seem evil unto you, chuse ye this day whom
“ ye will serve ; as for me, (firm and resolute)
“ and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

And they all said unto Joshua :

“ Nay,

“ Nay, but we will serve the Lord.” Upon this Joshua (who knew his People better than they knew themselves) most earnestly exhorted them; one and all, to set about renewing their covenant with God, and by the most solemn oath, made, as was usual, at the door of the Tabernacle at Shiloh, (the place where the Ark was deposited) the People individually did confirm it, and then all of them returning back to their tents on the plain, Joshua in presence of the whole Host, caused a Pillar to be erected to perpetuate the memory of this their solemn oath and public ratification.

It was very soon after, at his Palace in Timnath-Serah, in the hundred and tenth year of his age Joshua died; and they buried him in his own inheritance, on the north side of the hill of Gaash, within the Tribe, and on the Mount of Ephraim; beside his body, and within his coffin they put the knives of flint with which he circumcised Israel at Engad, when God expressly told him :

“ Hereby you have rolled away the reproach
“ of Egypt.”

A transaction which ever afterwards gave a name to the city—Gilgal or Rolling

The Book of Joshua records the History of thirty-five years, from the year of the World 2553, to 2588, and must have been a most valuable possession to the Israelites, as it contained the earliest and most authentic records of the extent, boundaries, and property of every individual Tribe; a Title-deed of each of their respective inheritances, and the Israelites were so fully satisfied with this distribution and division made to the twelve Tribes, that for many ages, no one Tribe ever encroached on the limits of its neighbour.

Although Moses and his Servant strike you with very different features of Character, the one as a divine Lawgiver uniting fortitude with meekness, and the other a Hero and his General, yet in some respects they bear a resemblance to one another. Both were filled with wisdom and prudence:

“ As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee.”

They both received their appointment from God; were both of them distinguished by similar manifestations of His power;

“ The Sea saw it and fled, and Jordan was
“ driven

" driven back. What aileth thee O Sea! that
 " thou fleddest, and thou Jordan that thou wast
 " driven back."

A Divinity in high and exalted Majesty held converse with both; with Moses alone in the desert, and with Joshua alone on the plains of Jericho, both stood on holy ground, and both were commanded in token of reverence to stand barefoot; in patriotic zeal and love of their People, in piety, integrity and disinterestedness, both shone alike conspicuous through life, and at its peaceful close how divinely pathetic are both their addresses to Israel, a solemn farewell sounding in their ears for ever.

Joshua's valour and warlike prowess so wonderfully suited to his duties and employment characterize the General: In manly courage and martial honours, Joshua holds a high pre-eminence, and in distant Colonies there are monuments now standing, which recognize his Valour, still recording:

" Hither have we fled from the exterminating
 " Sword of Joshua."

E S S A Y

E S S A Y VI.
ON THE BOOKS OF
J U D G E S
AND
R U T H.

J U D G E S.

AFTER the death of Joshua, the Israelites had no proper Ruler or civil authority: among them for some years, the government devolved on the High-Priest and the Elders, and in cases of difficulty the Sanhedrim or Grand Council were summoned. Each Tribe was governed by its own Magistrates, and in the war department elected its own General and Commander. A great

great part of the country was yet unsubdued, and many conflicts, much servitude and persecution the Israelites endured from the Natives and neighbouring Nations, who were yet contending for possession.

God was pleased from time to time, (as their exigencies required,) to raise up high and eminent Characters among them, and call them forth as Champions and Deliverers of Israel, in acknowledgement and gratitude, the Elders and People invested them with the supreme authority, affigning over to them the government under the title of Judge.

These Judges were extraordinary Magistrates, whose office was to preside in the Senate; protect the state; pronounce the law; and regulate divine worship. They were to govern by the laws of God and in doubtful cases by his spirit, with which they were endowed; they differed in nothing from Kings but in Title, pomp, and grandeur, and in their honours not being hereditary; they made peace and war; they summoned the tribes to arms; in cases of danger and difficulty, by means of the High-Priest, they were directed to apply for instruction from God,

The

The People all resorted to them for judgment, and annually they made a circuit throughout the land to administer Justice and preserve order and subordination.

Under the title of Judge fourteen different persons presided over the Israelites, and they were thus governed two hundred and fifty years, not including in them many years of servitude and bondage (during all which they were only governed by their Elders and Council) under the King of Mesopotamia, Moab, the Canaanites, Midian, the Amorites and Philistines.

At the death of Joshua, all Israel assembled at Shiloh, (the place where the ark was deposited) and as the Canaanites and neighbouring Kingdoms were plundering, and making daily inroads into their territories, they there inquired through the High-Priest what tribe should go up and oppose them : God was pleased to give them an immediate and explicit answer, " Judah shall go up."

The tribe of Simeon were their brothers and nearest neighbours, and Judah asked their assistance in this their first expedition, Simeon readily joined them : uniting their forces, these two Tribes marched them against the Canaanites and Perizzites : Adoni-Bezek the King met them in person
a bloody

a bloody battle was fought, and the Israelites slew ten thousand. Adoni-Bezek made his escape from the field, and hastily fled to the City of Bezek, He was there pursued, and taken alive: The Israelites spared his life, but to disable him from fighting or running away they cut off his two thumbs and his great toes, a punishment not unusual among the Princes of the East, for the King acknowledged the justice of the sentence, and He said, " threescore and ten Kings with their thumbs and great toes cut off gathered their meat under my table, as I have done to them, so God hath requited me : " The Israelites led Adoni-Bezek in triumph to Jerusalem, they looked upon his capture as a proof of God's favour and his righteous vengeance, and the King lived here a State-prisoner untill he died.

At this time the Chief in the Tribe of Judah was Caleb, a warlike Commander, who had exhibited many feats of valour, and shewn his faithfulness in being the only one, who accorded with Joshua in the report he had made of the land of Canaan: Caleb had made himself the Conquest of Jerusalem, and burned the whole City to the ground; enamoured with glory himself, he loved it in others: But Caleb was now far advanced in years, at the age of eighty-five, and as there were
many

many other populous, large and well fortified Cities yet to conquer, he thought it prudent not to exhaust his own strength in tedious regular sieges and laborious enterprizes, he therefore blew the trumpets, issued out a proclamation inspiring the youthful Hero with gallantry, and he makes an offer of the most precious prize in his possession, Achsah his beautiful daughter and a rich heiress, Caleb proposed her a reward in marriage to the brave foldier who should make himself master, and maintain possession of the first City. Such a proposal fired the bosom and animated the exertions of Othniel, son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, a spirited youth of consummate valour, who with his own hands had slain Chushan-Rishathaim King of Mesopotamia. The gallant Othniel took by storm Kirjath-Sepher, called the City of books, and supposed a University, it was inhabited by a gigantic race called Anakims and stood near Hebron. This intrepid Youth mounted the first breach, and made himself master of the City and claimed the rich prize of his Commander.

The dignity and title of Judge was first conferred on Othniel, he was invested with the autho-

Othniel, First Judge.

riety

nity and exercised it with virtue and honour, devoted to God and to the good of his People, Othniel rescued his country from oppression, prevented all future inroads, and the land had rest, and peace and in prosperity forty years.

After the death of Othniel, Eglon King of Moab invaded Israel and made them tributary, the Israelites remained under bondage to Moab eighteen years, at which time they were delivered by Ehud a Benjamite, a valiant and resolute man, lame of his right hand, a person well known to Eglon the Moabitish Monarch. Eglon had removed with all his court to Jericho, the City of Palm Trees, invited by the beauty and fruitfulness of the country, here Ehud obtained an audience and was admitted to the Kings presence, while he was talking to him in his summer parlour and paying him the annual tribute money, he told Eglon, "I have a message for thee O King from God," upon this every body withdrew, and as soon as they two were left alone, the King rose from his seat to hear the message. Ehud instantly stabbed him in the belly with such violence the haft of the dagger went in after the blade, Ehud was obliged to leave it in the body, and then softly letting himself out, he locked fast the door and carried off the key. The servants listening from time to time supposed the King might be

Vol. I. Y a-sleep

a sleep, in the meantime Ehud had hastily fled back to his brethren at Seirah, and told all he had done. The Israelites blew up the trumpets for war, assembled all their forces, fell furiously on the Moabites under their confusion and sudden alarm, and put them all to the sword. On this successful enterprize Ehud's bravery was rewarded by the People and they unanimously advanced him to the dignity of Judge.

Ehud, second Judge of Israel, procured for them a rescue from their bondage to Moab and a peace of eighty years.

On the Israelites return to their impiety and idolatry after the death of Ehud, God permitted them to fall an easy prey to their Philistine neighbours. The valiant Shamgar now rescued them from slavery assumed the title and became their third Judge. This intrepid Hero, with his own hands slew six hundred Philistines, with a plough-share he had picked up upon the road, and by so glorious a Feat completely drove them out, and delivered his country from the Philistine yoke, but Shamgar died in the first year of his dignity.

Notwithstanding Israel had experienced so asto-

Ehud, Second Judge. Shamgar, Third.
nishing

nishing an interposition, and so very spirited a rescue, they very soon became Idolaters, made alliances and held intercourse with the Nations around them which God had expressly forbid, and a more formidable Adversary was now permitted to enslave them. Jabin King of Canaan with a numerous Army and chariots of iron. Jabin held Israel under bondage and subjection twenty years, they were at length delivered from their heavy oppression by two Women. Deborah the Prophetess concerted the plan, Jael wife of Hebar completed it. Barak was Commander in Chief to Deborah and he at the head of ten thousand men defeated Sisera, the Canaanitish General, and his numerous Host strengthened with nine hundred chariots of iron. Sisera fled for his life, he left his chariot, ran on foot to the valley of Zaenaim, and hid himself in the tent of Jael, faint and dying with fatigue, totally exhausted, Sisera begged of her a draught of water, and Jael brought him a bottle of milk, Sisera swooned and fell into a sleep, Jael availed herself of the moment, struck a nail into his temple, and he was instantly dead. Barak pursued his victory, marched his spirited troops to the City of Hazor where Jabin kept his court, took the City, entered it in triumph and put all the inhabitants to the sword.

Israel now resumed its fertility and splendour under Debrah the Prophetess, who was invested with the supreme authority and proclaimed fourth Judge of Israel. On this glorious victory and signal deliverance, she composed a beautiful and triumphant ode, brilliant with lively figures, with sudden, quick and elegant transitions, and high sublimity: full of the ideas of her triumph, and transported with her victory, Deborah addresses her soul in a most beautiful exclamation; the exploit of Jael here lives for ever, a noble effort of courage and conduct; the fondness of the Mother of Sisera, her impatience, her inquiries, her answers, her workings of suspense, her hopes and fears are all highly picturesque. The Ode was designed to be sung in parts, and the last verse in chorus, to impress the stronger on the mind, the ideas of Omnipotence, the ardours of patriotic Zeal, and the overflowings of gratitude.

Under Deborah the land had rest forty years, but after her death Israel soon revolted, was again in bondage and sorely harrassed by the Midianites, they enslaved them seven years more, the Israelites now could only find shelter and safety among their strong Holds, the clefts and caverns

Deborah Fourth Judge.

of

of the rocks, where-ever they had planted and sowed their enemies gathered and reaped and possessed themselves of their crops, and of all the fruits of their labour.

God now kindly sent a Prophet to convince and reclaim his people, to represent to them the baseness of their ingratitude and idolatry, the evident sources of all their thralldom and sufferings. After He had thus admonished and condescendingly reasoned with Israel; God made choice of Gideon and called him forth as their champion and Deliverer.

In the simplicity and from the necessity of the times; to preserve his little flock of corn, Gideon was threshing it himself. On the threshing floor when he was privately shut up, an Angel appeared, and he saluted Gideon by the honourable title of the Saviour of Israel: the Angel then told him, his wished-for freedom God was now about to give. Gideon, an experienced warrior, dejected and groaning under the sufferings of his country, says, "O my Lord, if the Lord be with us why has all this befallen us, are we not in the hand of Midian? the Angel with a placid countenance betokening comfort, looked steadily on Gideon and He said;

" Go

"Go in this my might—thou shalt save Israel—have not I sent thee? Gideon still mistrusting, humbly replied, "O my Lord wherewith? my family is the meanest in Manasseh, and I the least in my Fathers house." The Angel now tells him, as easily shalt thou destroy the Host of Midian, as if they were One man, and by various miracles condescendingly and repeatedly performed, the Angel convinced Gideon, God had heard the cry of his People, their long wished-for freedom was indeed at hand.

On that very night God commanded Gideon to go himself and destroy the Altar and cut down the Grove of Baal, the sad source of Israels Idolatry, and afterwards with only a handful of men Gideon gained a complete victory over all the combined Armies of their oppressors, and Israel was laden with the spoil.

The night before this total overthrow of Midian the Angel appeared again at the camp of Israel and he said to Gideon, if thou yet fear to go down behold I will give thee one proof more. Take Phurah thy servant and go down with him alone to the enemies camp, and Gideon went down, and the Midianites, Amalekites and their allies lay all along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude and their Camels were without number, as sand on the

the sea shore. Gideon listened to a man telling his dream—a cake of barley (says he) tumbled into the Host and fell upon a tent, and overturned it, and the Tent lay all along—his fellow answered, tis surely the sword of Gideon, God hath delivered us into their hands : Gideon delighted at his heart, fell down and worshipped. He returned to the camp of Israel, arise, arise, God hath delivered into your hands the Host of Midian; highly fanciful and entertaining is Gideons onset, with only three hundred men with ~~concealed~~ ^{concealed} in pitchers, ~~and~~ ^{and} they aloud their trumpets (that they might be thought a mighty Host and these only their harbingers and torch-bearers) and at the dead of night they rushed into the enemies camp, crying out aloud,

“ The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon.”

In the utmost terror they fell fighting with one another, every mans sword against his fellow, thus furious and frantic they ran and fled ; Oreb and Zeeb two illustrious Princes they slew as they were pursuing Midian, and they brought both their heads and presented them to Gideon.

“ Gideon returned from Battle before the Sun
“ was up,

All Israel now assembled, and invested Gideon, with the Supreme Authority under the title of fifth Judge over Israel.

Gideon accepted the Honours, but he assured them their security would alone depend on their Divine Protector.

Gideon maintained his Dignity forty years during all which time no enemy molested them. He died in a good old age and left Israel in prosperity and at peace.

In a very short time the services of this experienced General and good Judge were soon forgot, the Israelites again became Idolaters, they worshipped Baalim and the host of Heaven, with the basest ingratitude they repaid the Piety, Valour and good government of their Judge.

Abimeleck succeeded to the Dignity, was invested with the supreme Authority, and most sadly He disgraced it. Abimeleck was a natural son by a concubine, highly artful, of a cruel base and intriguing disposition. He usurped his Fathers government, and the very first exercise of his authority was to destroy almost all his Fathers family, out of seventy Sons of Gideon, sixty nine brothers

Gideon Fifth Judge. Abimeleck, Sixth.

were

were slain, Jotham was the youngest of them all, this young Prince only escaped, and after his wife, severe and ever memorable speech he fled away to Beer, a City on the northern frontiers in the tribe of Judah, but one which had not acknowledged the authority of Abimeleck and would not swear allegiance.

The speech of this spirited youth, so harrassed and disappointed, wisely represents the Vanity of base men in power, and while it upbraids the folly and weakness of his Countrymen, it foretells their ruin; in very forcible language it tells them, that worthless men are the fondest of Power, the wise and good decline rule, and give the first preference to native ease and freedom; The vanity of men of the former Character is elegantly described, and made strikingly ridiculous :

“ And the Bramble said if in truth ye anoint
“ me King, come and put your trust in my
“ shadow, and if not, let fire come out of
“ the Bramble and devour the Cedars of Le-
“ banon :

The fire of the Bramble, (so short and momentary in the Eastern Countries,) was to burn up the tall Cedars, his new subjects, unless they

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would all come under his shade, and put their trust in him.

A City of Judah, named Thebez, revolted from his Government; Abimeleck marched with his Army, encamped before it and laid close Siege, but while he was storming the Garrison, a Woman rolled down a huge stone from a Tower, and struck him on the head; Abimeleck unwilling to die by the hands of a woman, commanded his Armour-bearer to dispatch him, and he was instantly obeyed.

Abimeleck was the only one who usurped and disgraced the Title and the Dignity, and He held the Government about three years.

Tolar the son of Puah and grandson of Dodo, an illustrious family of the Tribe of Issachar succeeded Abimeleck, a much more amiable and worthy Character. Tolar Judged Israel three and twenty years, He kept his Court at Shamir on Mount Ephraim where Tolar died, and they buried him in the City of Shamir; during the life-time of this Judge, we do not read of any enemies oppressing the Israelites.

Jair the Gileadite, a wealthy man of that

Tolar the Seventh Judge. Jair the Eighth.

of

part of the Tribe of Manasseh, which dwelt on the other side Jordan, was next invested with the Government, after the death of Tolar. Jair possessed a very large Territory in the land of Gilead, in which were no less than thirty Cities and the tract of Country went by the name of the Hamlets of Jair. This Judge had thirty Sons, to each of which he allotted one of his Cities; and in order to shew their high stile of Life, pre-eminence, and grandeur, the Text adds:

“ Each of the Sons of Jair rode on an Ass’s
“ Colt,”

A distinguished Honour in those days.

Jair judged Israel two and twenty years; He then died and was buried in the City of Camon.

The ingratitude and Idolatry of the Israelites renewed their troubles soon after the death of this last Judge, and they were again in bondage and sore oppressed by the Philistines and Ammon eighteen years. They had been expressly and repeatedly forbid to make any Alliance, league, or covenant with their idolatrous neighbours; notwithstanding which, the Inhabitants of the Towns and Cities they had taken, were only made tributary; they held intercourse with them

and thus violated the instructions and express commands given them, and now suffered sorely for disobedience. This was their Fifth Thralldom since the death of Joshua. To stop the rapid progress and slaughter of Ammon, who with their formidable Armies had already passed over Jordan in order to meet the united forces of Judah and Benjamin, and those of the House of Ephraim. The Israelites, terrified and alarmed, assembled themselves at Mizpeh, their place of worship, and they here fell on their faces, and most devoutly addressed themselves to God :

“ O God we have sinned, we have sinned,
 “ we have forsaken thee our God, and served
 “ Baal.

God was angry with Israel, and most pathetically He threatens, reproves, and condescends to reason with them :

“ Go and cry to the Gods, ye have chosen,
 let them deliver you in time of trouble.”

Israel cried out the more, we have sinned, we have sinned ; and they put away their strange Gods, and again and again right earnestly cried to God, and He heard their cry and compassionated the sorrows of his People.

On account of their obstinacy and Idolatry God had not favoured them now, as on former occasions, by electing them a Judge, under their very pressing grievances and necessities, the Israelites with the enemy at their gates were compelled to look out for a General, and they sent an invitation to a man of mighty valour, Jephthah the Gileadite, and they offered him the Command of all the Forces, and the Supreme Authority and Dignity of Judge. Jephthah was at that time Captain and Chief of a Banditti, principally Aliens and Fugitives, distinguished for their courage and valour; Jephthah received their message with distrust, and refused all their offers, until they had confirmed to him the Supreme Authority by solemn Oath, and swore Allegiance. Jephthah then came forward, and put himself at their Head. He dispatched a flag of Truce to Ammon. The Ammonites treated his proposals with sovereign disdain. Ammon was bent on Conquest. The Spirit of the Lord is now said to have come on Jephthah, and he passed with his Army over Gilead and Manasseh, and over Mizpeh, and from Mizpeh-Gilead he passed over to Ammon. Jephthah had levied a vast Army, commanded them himself, and encamped in full front of the Enemy. Intimidated and alarmed Jephthah in superstitious fear

fear vowed a solemn vow, just at the moment of
 engaging: if God would bless him and make him
 victorious, the first living thing he should meet
 coming out of his house on his return home, he
 would devoutly offer up in sacrifice. The Am-
 monites were totally routed, and Israel was laden
 with their spoils, but his Daughter, a virgin ex-
 quisitely beautiful, and his only child, proved
 the unhappy victim of the Fathers rash and in-
 considerate vow. The highly welcome news of
 the victory had reached her ears, to grace her
 Fathers triumph, in joy and extacy she ran out,
 headed a company of maidens elegantly at-
 tired, and with timbrells and dances, expressive
 of dutiful respect and filial joy; while they were
 thus transported and employed, she proved the
 innocent but unhappy object, on which Jephthah
 cast his eyes, and thereby doomed his Daughter
 to destruction.

Jephthah rent his cloaths, and with the liveliest
 expressions of sorrow, he disclosed his rashness
 and the fatal secret;

“ Alas, alas my Daughter, thou hast brought
 “ me very low—thou art one of them that trou-
 “ bleth me. I have opened my mouth to the
 “ Lord and cannot go back.”

His

His amiable Daughter heard it patiently, and with a firm composure dutifully and affectionately replied—

“ O my Father since the Lord has taken vengeance on thine enemies, even on Ammon, do unto me according to all thou hast vowed.”

His daughter only requested a respite of two months to retire in solitude to the mountains, together with her maidens and there bewail her virginity, at the expiration of that time she punctually returned to her Father.

Jephthah's conduct strongly exhibits the religious reverence with which an oath was then respected, and how he considered himself as bound to give up every consideration, rather than violate the solemn engagement he had made with God.

It was ever after a custom in Israel, that the Daughters of Israel, went yearly, four days in a year, to lament for the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite the Israelitish Judge.

Some have thought that she was offered up as a sacrifice, but others more probably that his daughter was given to the Lord in perpetuity, as

a devoted

a devoted thing, and she consents to the vow, not to be slain nor to be a burnt offering, but a servant of the Tabernacle, an attendant on the High-Priest and to die in that state. The Israelites greatest happiness was in their children, every woman hoped the Messiah might be born of her, and hence the great sorrow, disgrace and mortification of being childless.

Jephthah ruled Israel six years. He died at that time and was buried in one of the Cities of Gilead.

Ibzan a native of Bethlehem was the tenth Judge of Israel. This Prince had sixty sons and daughters, and as a numerous issue was considered a high honour and a peculiar blessing of Providence, this Judge was greatly blessed. He lived to see them all settled and married, so that Ibzan had an hundred and twenty sons and daughters, and sons and daughters in law, besides grand-children.

Ibzan governed Israel seven years and was succeeded by Elon of the tribe of Zebulun.

Elon judged Israel ten years at which time he died and was buried in Aijalon in his own Tribe.

Ibzan Tenth Judge. Elon Eleventh.

Abdon

Abdon son of Hillel of the tribe of Ephraim was twelfth Judge of Israel, and after possessing the Dignity eight years, He died and left forty sons and thirty grandsons, and the Seventy all of them rode on Asses Colts, after the manner of the great and wealthy men in Israel, for in the simplicity of those times, asses were esteemed a very valuable part of their substance.

Abdon was buried in Pirathon, in the land of Ephraim, on the mount of the Amalekites.

At the time of Abdon's death, Eli, a younger branch of the house of Aaron, was High-Priest and he succeeded to the Dignity of Judge.

Eli was the first among the Israelites who joined, the Supreme Authority and Title of Judge to the High-Priesthood. He was a Prince of a very easy and most indolent disposition, neglectful of his Government and very remiss in his Family. His two Sons were vicious, haughty, tyrannical and ambitious, but Eli never chose to be at the trouble of reprov'ing them; such weak indulgence proved the sad source both of the Father's ruin and his Sons.

Abdon Twelfth Judge.

Eli Thirteenth.

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A 2

A few

A few months only after Eli had been invested with the Government, the Israelites again Idolaters were punished for their ingratitude and impiety, and in bondage again to the Philistines. This was Israels sixth Thralldom. Insufferable were their hardships and oppression, but the sad severity proved the means of bringing them back to their duty, and of reclaiming them, most earnestly they addressed themselves in prayer, and God now raised up for Israel a most wonderful Champion and Deliverer. An Angel appeared to his Mother, who was then an old woman and always reputed to have been barren, and afterwards the same Angel appeared to Monoah the Father, and foretold the birth of Sampson to them both. The Angel laid a strict prohibition on the Mother, and it was to extend to the Son. Monoah was of the tribe of Dan and his Fathers name was Zorah. The younger part of Sampson's life is unnoticed, we hear nothing of him until he set out on a journey to Timnah, a city in his own tribe, but now in the hands of the Philistines, Sampson met in his way a young Lion roaring for his prey, and his encounter with him, gave Sampson a pleasing proof of his amazing strength, for though unarmed he killed the Lion and flung its carcase into a hollow on the road side, some months after passing that

Eli and Sampson, Judges.

road

road again, a hive of bees had taken possession of the carcass, and it contained much honey. While at the City of Timnah, Sampson fell in love with a Philistine damsel, and as soon as he returned home, he named his attachment to his Parents, and he said,

“ I pray you get her me to wife,”

The request surprised both Father and Mother, and they said,

“ Is there no women among the Daughters of thy Brethren that you chuse a wife from among the Philistines ?”

Sampson pleaded his strong attachment, nay Father, this Woman pleaseth me well, I pray you get her me. The Sons importunity at length prevailed, after several meetings between the families, Sampson married her. At the celebration of his Nuptials, after the fashion of the times, a train of no less than thirty young men were assembled every day in high festivity, and the principal Bridefman was called the Bridegrooms friend, in their jollity and merriment, as a trial of sagacity, a riddle was proposed, and it was then a very usual mode of laying a wager. Each of the company present should give Sampson a shirt and a suit of

A 22

raiment

raiment, if they could not unravel his riddle, but in case they did, each was to receive the same forfeit from the bridegroom.

Sampson's riddle was,

" Food came from the devourer, and sweetness from that which is eager and sharp,"

The Bride kept worrying Sampson night and day for seven days and seven nights (the time these festivals lasted) for an explanation, and at length tired to death with her never-ceasing importunity Sampson told it his wife, and she terrified to death revealed the secret to her Countrymen, who had positively declared they would burn her alive and all her Father's house, in case she could not get her husband to unravel his Riddle,

The last day of the Feast Sampson asked for an explanation, and the young men answered,-

" What is stronger than a Lion? what is sweeter than honey?"

Sampson told them instantly whence they acquired their knowledge, and in order to make good his promise and pay his wager, Sampson set out and went to Ashkelon, a city at some distance, but not far from Jerusalem, and He there slew thirty of the Philistines, and delivered up to the

the thirty young men, the thirty changes of raiment, shirts and all.

Some time after availing himself of Sampsons absence from Timnah, his Father-in-law, who paid no regard to principle or honour, disposed again of his daughter, and married her to another man. Sampson passionately furious, studying only his revenge, set out and caught a number of young foxes, with which that country was sorely infested, and tying several of them together by the tails and firebrands flaming between them, he drove three hundred of them among the standing corn just now ripe for harvest, and others he turned into the Vineyards, and Olive grounds, and destroyed the produce of their lands. The inhabitants were all in an uproar, and suspecting the Father to be the aggressor, they burnt down his house to the ground and every thing belonging to him.

Judah was at this time tributary and under the Philistine yoke, the Israelites dreading the consequences, were sore affraid, and stood expecting every moment the wrath and vengeance of their Masters. Sampson in order to conceal himself had gone up to Etam, and climbed a steep rock to get out of their reach. The Israelites no less than three thousand of them followed him, and there representing their danger, made a league with Sampson, expostulated

expostulated with him, and brought him bound hand and foot to a City of the Philistines, and led him before the Magistrates. The Philistines overjoyed shouted aloud at the sight of Sampson, but he snapping his cords asunder, and seeing on the ground the jaw bone of an Ass, he took it up and slew with it one thousand of the Philistines. Thus literally fulfilling a prediction,

“ One man of you shall chase a thousand.”

Not very long after this slaughter, as he was walking in the streets of Gaza, the Gazites seeing him in their City, shut up their gates, set a strong guard, ordered a double watch and Sampson to be secured, but Sampson rising at midnight unhinged and unbolted the massy gates of Gaza, and took posts and gates and bars and carried them off on his shoulders mounting the hill towards Hebron.

By the insinuating Arts, intrigues, and contrivances of Delilah his mistress, Sampson was at length worried out of his secret and bereaved of his strength, he confessed to her truly (but not until he had attempted many evasions) it was connected with the hair of his head, and while he was confidentially sleeping in her lap, she with a pair of scissors cut it close off, and accepted of
the

the Magistrates for her perfidy, a bribe of eleven hundred pieces of Silver.

Upon an Event so destructive to his safety and to all further resistance, Sampson became an easy Capture to his Enemies, and the Magistrates instantly ordered both his Eyes to be struck out, heavy fetters of brass to be fastened on him, and employed him as a Grinder in the Prison-house.

At a grand Jubilee when all their Princes and the Philistine Nobility, together with many thousands were met together on a spacious and most magnificent Amphitheatre, celebrating a high Festival in honour of their Gods, in their Jollity and merriment, they sent to the Prison-house and ordered forth blind Sampson, once so much their dread, now their sport and derision. His hair was much grown, and with it he found his strength returning. Sampson so contrived as to be led near the center of the building, and underneath it, then fixing himself round two of its main Pillars, He pulled this immense pile of building on himself and buried their Princes and all their Nobles and many thousands in its ruins.

So spacious is said to have been this amazing Theatre that no less than three thousand were standing on the top of it.

Sampson's

Samson's Brethren and all the house of his **Father** came down and dug his Body from out the ruins, and brought it up and buried it between **Zorah** and **Estaol**, in the burying place of **Manoah** his Father.

Samson was Judge of **Israel** twenty years with **Eli** the High-Priest, sharing together with him the Government, and **Eli** carried it on twenty years more after the Death of this very wonderful **Champion**. We read with surprize the Ingratitude of the **Israelites**, and that they did not shake off their shameful yoke under this **Illustrious Danite**, but still more that they should bind their Judge and Avenger, and treacherously give him up to their Tyrants and Oppressors, as if he had been the betrayer and not the Guardian and Deliverer of his Country.

The appearance of an Angel, more than once, to notify the birth of **Samson**, and give directions to his Father and Mother respecting him; the Angels ascent, so visible, in a bright flame of fire; the early proofs of amazing strength; the celebration of **Samson's** wedding; his famous Riddle so artfully blinded; his astonishing feats; the bloody slaughter of the **Philistines**, and fatal Destruction of them at his Death, are all a curious train of Anecdotes very interesting and wonderful,

ful, and they fell out about the year of the World 2887.

Sampson proved a severe scourge and a powerful check to the pride of the Philistines, distinguished for his patriotism, courage and strength of body, and God chose to annex this last to his hair, and make the continuance of the one dependent on the preservation of the other, being the mark of his consecration as a Nazarite. We must seriously condemn Sampson's blind confidence and criminal infatuation, and lament the want of dignity and sad distraction during his Government, and the unprecedented slaughter at his death.

Some of the Judges are honourably spoken of by the Apostle Paul: "The time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak and of Sampson and of Jephthah, of David also and of Samuel, who through Faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the Mouth of Lions, waxed Valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of Aliens."

Between the reigns of their Judges the Israelites at times utterly abandoned the worship of God, lived without Government without Law. Such want of Authority favoured the perpetration of

some of the blackest, most odious and horrible transactions, the Idolatry of Micah and strange intercommunity of his Religion, the invasion of the Danites, distressful base and cruel murders, the enormous crimes of the Israelites and the Benjamites in particular, which are here most tragically and disgracefully recorded.

After the death of Sampson, Eli maintained the Supreme Authority alone, indolent in his Government and remiss in his Family, his conduct was sadly defective, but He still maintained the Title of Judge together with the Dignity of the High-Priesthood twenty years longer, and his People were the whole time tributary and under bondage to the Philistines.

At this time the Israelites made a spirited struggle for their Liberty—a bloody battle was fought, the Ark of God was ran away with by the Philistine army. Eli in great distress seated himself at the City-gate to hear the earliest news of the engagement, it was here told him, the battle was lost, his two Sons both of them slain, and the Ark of God carried off in triumph; on hearing this last the good old man was struck dumb, became quite senseless, fell from off his seat, broke his neck and died instantly.

3 The

The reigns of the Judges together with the intervening years of slavery and bondage (during which time they were almost without Government,) make up a period of three hundred and seventeen years. From the year of the World 2612 to 2929.

The book is thought to have been wrote by Samuel, in Ramoth-Gilead, after he had resigned up his Government to Saul.

The Israelites invested their Judges with the Supreme Authority under certain restrictions and without the ensigns of royalty. Many of them were elected by the People on the performance of some signal exploits, and their Government continued for life.

The book is divided into two parts, the first (ending at the Sixteenth Chapter) contains an account of the Judges from Othniel to Sampson—the second part records the history of some occurrences which fell out not long after the death of Joshua, but they are placed at the end of the book, in order that they might not interrupt the course of the history.

The lives of the two last Judges, Eli and Samuel is the subject of a subsequent book.

The period here recorded must have struck you with a strange vicissitude of unprecedented events, many illustrious exploits, glaring and miraculous proofs of Divine Agency conspicuously displaying the Justice, Mercy, and condescension of God. Some mixed characters. and very many actions reprehensible.

The book furnishes a lively description of a fluctuating and unsettled Nation, a Republic at times without Magistracy, full of danger and distraction. Few Prophets instructed or controuled them, " the high-ways were un-occupied, the travellers walked through bye-ways, and the book concludes, in those days there was no King in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

After the death of Eli an inter-regnum took place, in which the Israelites had no civil Magistrate at all for twenty years and seven months, at which time, Samuel the Prophet that amiable and highly exalted character took upon himself the Government, by his prudence and exertion He rescued Israel from slavery and assumed the Title of Judge. With assiduity and irreproachable integrity, Samuel maintained the Dignity twenty

Samuel Fourteenth Judge.

years

years, at which time the People demanded a King, the Government became Monarchical, and Samuel, without one spark of ambition resigned up his Authority to Saul.



ON THE BOOK

OF

RUTH.

THE Book of Ruth contains a private and domestic History of two very amiable Women, and takes its Name from one of them.

The Events probably fell out much earlier, but are here recorded to preserve the thread of the History, between the book of Judges and the first book of Samuel, and also with more exactness and precision to ascertain the Pedigree of the Messiah.

Obed the Son of Boaz, was the Father of Jesse, the Father of David. The History is a beautiful unadorned picture of Nature, affecting-
ingly-

ingly told, with many masterly strokes, highly interesting and entertaining: A celebrated Poet has shewn great judgment, and afforded much pleasure by the choice of the subject, and his very elegant manner of telling the story.

Naomi a Widow in a strange Country, to which she had been driven by a famine in her own, resolved on her return to Bethlehem, to her native Town and Kindred, and she set out on her journey, accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, who now were also Widows, and very desirous of going with her.

Naomi was quite distressed they should leave all their friends and their Father's house, and she pathetically dissuades and presses them to return back, strongly and affectionately pleading the prospect before them of marrying again, and as they were both young, of settling in their own Country; such settlement she represented much more unlikely to take place in her's, and amongst any of her kindred there; as to herself, they well knew she had no more Sons to give them, nor even a hut however uncheary and forlorn to accommodate them at Bethlehem.

Naomi's importunity at length prevailed with one, the picture of poverty was too dark and
deplorable

deplorable for Orpah, and she in a flood of tears hung on her Mother-in-law, took an affecting leave and turned back to Moab. No reasoning, arguments or remonstrance, no persuasion whatever could prevail with Ruth; with tears and intreaties irresistibly expressive, she clung round Naomi—death only should ever part them, the God of Naomi should be the God of Ruth for ever and for ever—“Whither thou goest I will go—where thou lodgest I will lodge—thy People, my People—thy God, my God.” Naomi kept fruitlessly exhibiting the many wants and miseries they should be exposed to, and against which there was no providing, and in vain she pointed out the prudent example of Orpah. Thus affectionately they journeyed day after day until they arrived at Bethlehem. It was the place of Naomi’s nativity, and she had long lived in plenty and hospitality there. The people, and many who remembered her, came out to see Naomi—alas, is this Naomi? the wife of Elimelech, who lived in such plenty and shew—Ruth tender and piteous feels all the distress of her mother—our conveniences (says she) must depend on ourselves—our daily bread be earned from our daily labour—it is the beginning of Harvest, you Mother, are weary and overcome by your Sorrows—I am able to go and gather what I can from the
Field.

field. A Kinsman of Elimelech a mighty man of wealth named Boaz, as he farmed his own lands, was watching the reapers, seeing the Damsel, he enquired who she was, and they told him a Moabitess who had journeyed from Moab with Naomi, she had begged leave of them to gather, and glean from the reapers, and (say they) she has been with us all day: hearing all this Boaz goes up to her and told her, he had noticed her dutiful attendance, and affectionate care of her Mother-in-law, and desired her henceforward to keep always in company with his maidens—

“ Go not I charge you to glean any other fields, neither go ye from hence, abide fast by my maidens, I have ordered my young men, none of them to molest you, when thirsty go to the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.”

With silent sweetness and modesty, Ruth gratefully accepted the kindness, and courtesy of Boaz, he had now an opportunity of seeing her person, and being struck by her behaviour, Boaz further told her, he understood she was come here a stranger, and far from her own country, that she had piously resolved to place herself under the protection and guidance of the God of Israel, he commended her conduct, solemnly he prayed God to

blefs her, and reward a difpofition fo dutiful and praiſe-worthy. Boaz on meeting her again, he bid her confider herſelf as one of his People, to eat of the bread and dip her morſel in the vinegar at meal-times, and fit chearfully beſide the reapers, and he reached her himſelf parched corn and ſhe eat, and was ſatisfied, and left. After this he admitted her to glean among the ſheaves, and commanded his reapers purpoſely to let fall ſome handfuls, that ſhe might pick up. Ruth was now able to carry home no leſs than an Ephah of barley; full of joy and tender affection ſhe brought it home to Naomi, told her of all the great kindneſs and humanity ſhe had received, and the name of my Benefactor (ſays ſhe) was Boaz—Naomi exclaimed in a tranſport,

“ The man is near akin to us, my beloved
“ Ruth.”

During both the barley, and the wheat harveſt, Ruth continued to follow after the reapers all day, and every evening carried home her gleanings, and returned to Naomi. Affiduouſly thoughtful, the Mother was wiſhing and contriving how ſhe might beſt reward the tender and dutiful affection of Ruth, and at length ſhe wiſely laid a plan to engage her Kinsman to marry her, and moſt happily ſucceeded.

The

The story pleasingly concludes with the marriage of Boaz to Ruth, and she bore him a son named Obed, and he was the Father of Jesse, the Father of David.

Naomi was invited to live with Boaz and her Daughter-in-law, and she became an affectionate nurse to her Son.

A Picture of Nature surely in its highest refinement—Naomi and Ruth are all tenderness and friendship, and affords us an evident proof that no difference of sentiment or age, can overbear the strong impulse of kindred affection.

Ruth clave to Naomi, her soul was knit to the soul of her Mother-in-law, the misery of want, no difference in religion, nor the prospect of living in a country strange to her, nor the example of her Sister, could induce Ruth to forsake this tender friend of her heart.

Can language more strongly express affectionate regard? can friendship be more happily exemplified, or more pleasingly rewarded?



ON THE TWO BOOKS
OF
S A M U E L
AND THE REIGNS OF
S A U L
AND
I S H B O S H E T H.



E S S A Y VII.

ON THE BOOKS OF

S A M U E L.

A PLEASING digression of family Anecdotes have a little interrupted the Jewish History, but they were intended to settle a very important Genealogy, afterwards distinguishingly glorious.

A Prophet now, the wisest and best of men resumes the History, describes the Events in a highly pleasing manner, and illustrates his characters with beautiful simplicity and elegance. Samuel appeared a Prophet, when the spirit of Prophecy

phesy was little known, and he was called a Seer, but so conspicuous were his talents, and so exemplary his life, that " all Israel from Dan to Beertheba (the two extremities of the Kingdom) knew Samuel to be a Prophet of the Lord."

The first book contains a space of near a century reckoning from the birth of Samuel, to the death of Saul in the year 2948, as Samuel died at the age of ninety-eight, and Saul about two years after him.

The two books give the concluding history of the two last Judges Eli and Samuel, and the Reigns of the two first Kings, Saul and David, together with the life and fatal end of Ishbolheth.

During the inter-regnum and cessation of all order and government which fell out upon the death of Eli, the Israelites were sorely harrassed by the Philistines, a tyranny and persecution which grew more and more oppressive and insufferable. Samuel the Prophet became their Deliverer, He issued out a proclamation, blew the trumpet for war, and assembled all Israel at Mizpeh their constant place of Worship. Samuel, and all the People here kept a solemn most religious fast, and while he was making ready his sacrifice, after He had killed a fucking lamb, and was preparing to offer

offer it up, upon the Altar for a burnt-offering, the Philistines, jealous and enraged at their meeting, marched out in battle array with a numerous Host and encamped within sight of the Israelites; while in high consternation and sorely intimidated Israel stood viewing this immense multitude, a violent tempest with thunder, lightning and hail poured down from Heaven and destroyed the Philistine Host, Camp and People were all smitten, and thrown into the utmost horror and distraction. Israel thus inspirited fell fiercely on them as they fled, and pursued the Philistines even to their own Cities, the very gates of Bethcar and Gath,

On this Divine interposition and glorious success, the Israelites invested Samuel with the Supreme Authority, and proclaimed him Judge over Israel. By this total overthrow Samuel rescued his country from the Philistine yoke, and put an end to a tyranny and servitude which had lasted more than forty years. The Philistines came no more into the boundaries and coasts of Israel, but restored them all the Cities they had taken, from Ekron even unto Gath. Peace was now established also with the Amorites,

Samuel to perpetuate the memory of this very signal interposition and glorious Deliverance

Vol. I,

D d

erected

erected on the field of battle, a monument of stone, inscribing it

“ The Stone of Help.”

Samuel was a child granted to the devout and very fervent prayers of his Mother, on which account by a most solemn vow, Hannah dedicated her son from his earliest life to God, and she brought him to the Altar, and entered him into its service when he was only three years old; as he grew up he ministered to the High-Priest in the Holy Functions, girded round with a linen Ephod a loose upper Garment wore by the Priests, and he was first employed to open and shut the doors of the Tabernacle. Very early indeed Samuel received his first directions and manifestation from God, and it respected the house of Eli and Judgment against him, “his Sons had made themselves vile, and Eli restrained them not.” A very signal display and intimation of God’s reproof and intentions were told by the child to Eli, and the High-Priest mildly replied. “ It is the Lord “ let Him do what seemeth him good.”

Samuel’s residence was at Ramah, from whence He made a yearly Circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal; and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all their Cities. By a wise and diligent Administration He restored
the

the purity of their religious worship, maintained order, peace and subordination, advancing his People to wealth honour and respectability.

Samuel with dignity maintained his Government over Israel twenty years, at which time, though they were thus distinguishingly prospered and blessed by his unwearied assiduity, his pious and amiable example, the People became corrupt and debauched, pride and ambition sowed its rancorous seed among all ranks, attracted by the false glare, and Pageantry of a Court the many lucrative places in the House-hold or the State, naturally fond of change and eager in the pursuit of distinction and honours, the People tumultuously assembled at Ramah and demanded of Samuel to elect them a King; in order to relieve himself Samuel had placed Joel and Abiah, his two Sons, at Beersheba, the extremity of his Kingdom, to administer Justice and be his representative, the People alledged against his Sons, that they were corrupt and had accepted a bribe, the Elders and Rulers availing themselves of this report complained loudly of their baseness and misconduct, crying out Joel and Abiah shall never succeed to the Government, we will have a King, your Sons are unworthy to rule over us.

Samuel

Samuel was much distressed and angry at their villie, He wisely represented to them, the disadvantages and sufferings they were about to incur. The Monarchs of the East were always arbitrary, despotic and tyrannical, Samuel painted in glaring colours the ambition and high exercise of their Authority,

“ He will take your Sons to drive his chariots, and be his horsemen, and some shall run before him. Captains shall preside over thousands, and Captains over fifties. Ye shall ear his ground, and reap his harvest, and make his spears and build his chariots. Your Daughters he will take to be his servants, to cook his meat and bake his bread: He will seize your fields, and your Vineyards, and your Olive grounds and give them to his Courtiers: your Men-servants, and your Maid-servants, and your goodliest young Men, and your Asses He will put them to his work.”

Thus Samuel earnestly reasoned with them, upbraided their undutifulness and want of gratitude, nevertheless the People refused to listen, One and All cried out — “ nay but we will have a King to rule over us.”

God

God had condescended to be held in the character of a temporal King to the Israelites, residing (as it were) among them, and issuing his Decree from the Tabernacle: to require a King was therefore to reject his Government, Samuel plainly saw the ruin and sad tendency of their murmurings and revolt; He was more and more at a loss, most devoutly Samuel addressed himself to God, and He was pleased condescendingly to tell His Prophet "the People are rejecting Me, grant them their Petition:" and now upon their obstinate and very rash perseverance, Samuel at the appointment and command of God anointed Saul King over Israel, a very tall and beautiful youth, one of the Sons of Kish and of the tribe of Benjamin.

The first book of Samuel relates the completion of the Prophecies, and the remaining part of the history of the house of Eli, you will be much struck with the weak indolent infatuation of Eli, so wisely contrasted with the firm piety, prudence and active zeal of Samuel. The birth of Samuel, his dedication to God, and very early employ in the Tabernacle: the curious anecdotes of Elkanah and Hannah, the Father and Mother of Samuel, are interesting and entertaining subjects of the first Chapter. In Hannah's inspired Hymn

Hymn the word *Messiah* for the first time occurs in Scripture. Hannah here characterizes the anointed of the Lord, the exalted Sovereign and final Judge who though he had been prophesied of, by several, had not as yet been called the *Messiah*. After the history of his own Family follows the destruction of Phineas and Hophni the two Sons of the High-Priest, together with the sad and fatal end of the Father, who on hearing of the loss of the battle, the death of both his Sons, and what was still worse, the carrying away of the Ark quite out of the country towards Ashdod, Eli fainted, became senseless, fell back from off his seat and broke his neck.

The book next records the very wonderful sufferings and the sore plagues inflicted on the Philistines, while they kept possession of the Ark: they looked upon the Ark as a vanquished Captive to their own tutelary God. They triumphantly placed it in his Temple before Dagon, a monument of his Victory: the day following when they resorted to the Temple, to say their morning prayers, Dagon was lying prostrate on the ground, and they religiously replaced their God. The day after Dagon was found again on the ground and broke to pieces. The Philistines chose yet to retain the Ark, in hopes of acquiring
the

the favour of so superior a Deity, but the People, of Ashdod declared it should not abide with them, the hand of the God of Israel was lifted up against them and against Dagon: in a religious procession they sent it to the City of Gath, but it made the same sad havock in Gath, a desolating pestilence raged through their City and destroyed its inhabitants, the Ark was then in solemn procession carried towards Ekron, but the Magistrates and People came out to meet it, and terrified at the two preceeding calamities refused to admit it,

“ The Ark of the God of Israel would slay them and all their People.

God smote them every where with plagues until they had sent the Ark quite out of their Country, The Priests of Dagon assembled, held a grand council, and advised the Philistines to fasten on two Milch Kine with proper harness to a new cart, and place the Ark in the middle of it, and let the Kine go which way they would, and they took the straight way to Beth-shemesh the first Town of the Israelites, the Philistine Nobles accompanied it, and watched it to the borders, and were eye-witnesses to the reception it met with and the general joy of the Israelites, after which the five Lords returned back to Ekron.

The

The seventh Chapter relates Samuel's assembling the People to Mizpeh, the solemn Fast he proclaimed, the judgment of God on the Philistines, their destruction and total over-throw.

The eighth is the tumultuous meeting of the Israelites to demand a King, to judge them, to go before them and fight their battles, and the Prophet's wife, zealous but ineffectual expostulations with them. In the ninth Chapter Saul is most pleasingly introduced, and in the tenth anointed King over Israel.

The reign of Saul, the appointment and anointing of David, his introduction at the Court of Saul, his valour and his many persecutions, whereby God chose to humble him, and train him up for the high honours and dignity he intended him, fill up the remainder of this first book.

In the twenty-fifth Chapter you read of the death of this venerable Prophet and truly good Man aged ninety eight, and the book finishes with the death of Saul who survived the Prophet only two years.

These two books of Samuel carry on the history and are a very useful introduction to the first and second book of the Kings. The
second

second book is a continuation of the life and reign of David almost to the death of that illustrious Prince, together with a history of the Church and Common-wealth of Israël during a period of forty years.

This venerable Prophet was a most amiable highly exalted and truly virtuous character, distinguished for his Firmness, Piety, his virtuous Courage and zeal for God, feared, revered and beloved by the People, a Prophet and a Judge of Israël twenty years before the exchange of Government and revolt of the Israelites took place, and before He resigned up his Authority to Saul.

Without a spark of Ambition Samuel assumed and maintained the Dignity, and he executed the important duties with irreproachable integrity. He gave up his Authority and Government without a shew of reluctance, and most readily at the command of God annointed two strangers to royalty, to the total exclusion of his own Family.

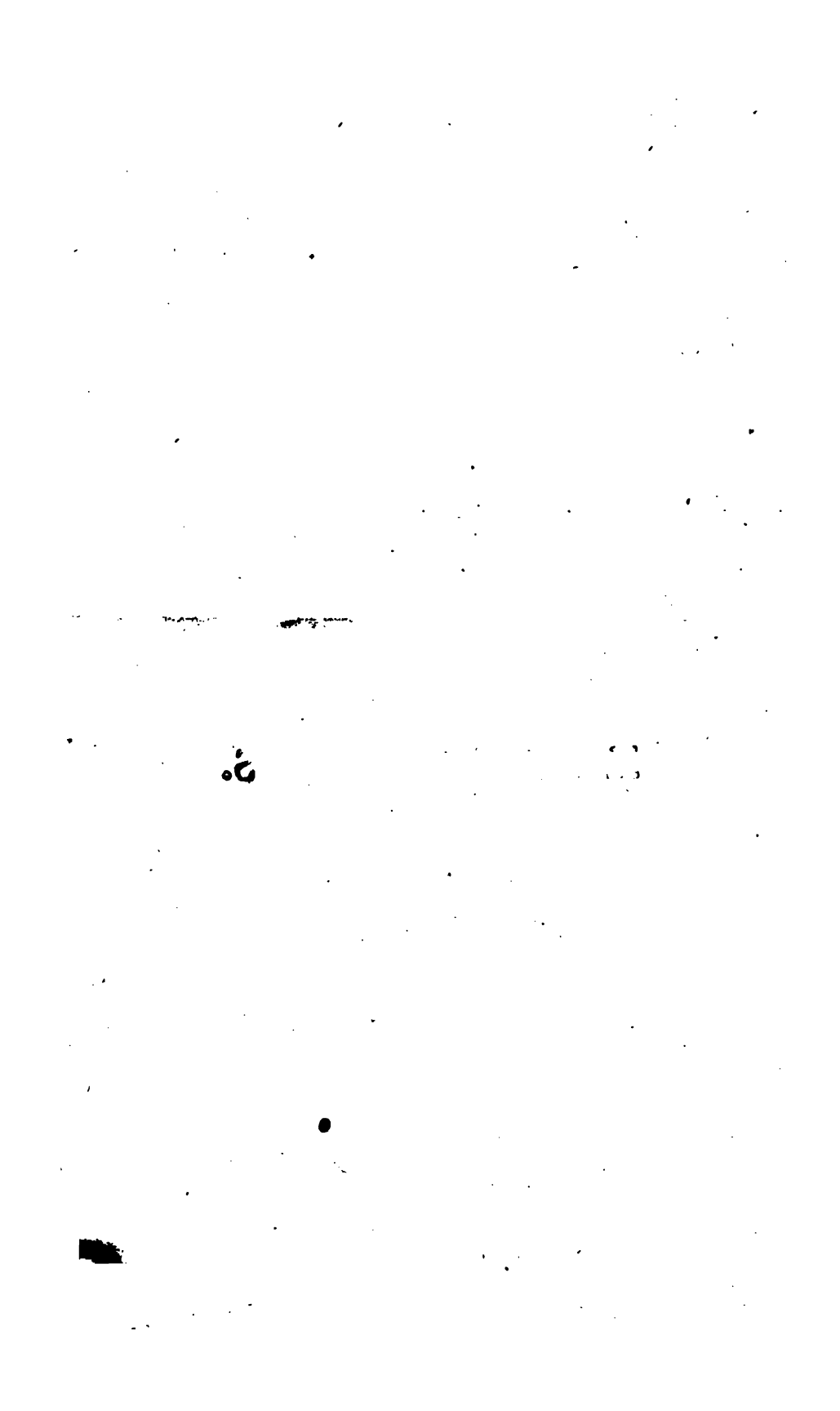
A highly honored Servant of God, a most righteous Judge, and faithful Prophet, an example to his People. Amiable, wise and good, his character will be for ever revered, held up to view for universal applause, and the silent Commendation of a World.



R E I G N S

OF THE

I N G S.



O N T H E L I F E
A N D
R E I G N
O F
S A U L

IN the year of the World 2909 and 1095 years before the birth of our Saviour the Reign of the Judges ended. The Government was exchanged in Judæa, and the Kingdom became Monarchical.

Saul by the appointment of God was at this time invested with the Supreme Authority and anointed by Samuel the Prophet King over Israel.

With

With unaffected Piety and true Dignity, Samuel unambitiouſly reſigned up his government. He blew the trumpets, convened all his People to Mizpeh their conſtant place of worſhip, and there publicly preſented Saul by proclamation, and again annointed him King of Iſrael. Saul a beautiful youth, Son of Kiſh, a Benjamite, is very pleaſingly introduced by the Prophet, and we have here his firſt nomination and hiſtory :

“ A choice young man and goodly, from his ſhoulders upwards, he was higher than any of the People”—

In the ſimple ſtile of thoſe early days, Saul was engaged in family duties, the greateſt perſonages then looked after their own cattle the riches of the country, his Fathers Aſſes were ſtrayed, they were loſt, and Saul with a ſervant was ſent out to ſeek them, (in Judæa Aſſes were a very valuable part of their ſubſtance,) Saul and his man travelled and ſearched all over the country, and paſſed three whole days without ſeeing them. Saul then ſays to the ſervant, my Father will think more about us than the Aſſes, do let us turn back and go home, the ſervant replied, by the courſe of the country we are very near Ramah, and he propoſed to him going into the City. There was a man of God lived at Ramah, wiſe and very knowing

knowing and honourable, all that he says comes to pass, they call him a Seer and a Prophet. He had dwelt all his life in the neighbourhood, and was high in repute, revered and beloved by them all. Saul was delighted with the proposal, well thought of, says Saul, but what have we to give? behold says the servant, I have the fourth part of a shekel of silver, that will I give the man of God to tell us of our way, as they were going up the hill to the town, they met the young women with their pitchers, (as was always the custom) they were fetching of water from the well, Saul enquired of them for the Seer, they told him. He was just on the road, ascending up the hill to the high place, where he offered his Sacrifice, and the People were all waiting for him there.

Samuel had been forewarned of God, he should the very next day have a meeting with Saul. He was the person who should be King over Israel, and as he was mounting the hill to public worship and offer his burnt-offering, Saul and his Servant overtook him, and they enquired of him after the Seer. His Father had lost his Asses, they had been out on the search three whole days, pray would he tell them where they might find the Seer? Samuel respectfully answered, " He was the person they
"were

" were enquiring for ;" as to the Asses, they were already found, and were already at home ; but (addressing himself to Saul) I have a very important message to deliver to you, and if you will dine with me to day, you shall pursue your Journey home to Gibeah to morrow.

Samuel invited all the Elders and Rulers of Ramah, a large party of thirty, to meet Saul, and He very highly distinguished and honoured his guest, He placed him at the head of his table, supplied him with the most delicate and best of all his Provision, and after he had hospitably and respectfully feasted him, towards evening he invited him up to the top of his house (usually the best apartments) and there Samuel held a private conversation with Saul, and told him of the high Honours and Dignity to which God was advancing him. The next morning Samuel waited upon his guest and called him up himself. Saul and his Servant set out on their return home, and Samuel respectfully accompanied them a little way out of the City ; Samuel then directed the servant to go on before, and Saul to stop a while with him, that he might renew his conversation with Saul, and tell him more of what God had appointed respecting him ; and when the servant was out of sight, Samuel poured a vial of Oil upon the Head of Saul, and saluted him

him " King over Israel : " Saul's reply was modest and sensible, He was the smallest of his tribe and Family, unacquainted with the Duties of a Station so exalted ; the Prophet kissed him with a kiss of Homage, and then with Zeal assured him, God would impart his Spirit, would give him a new Heart, and very shortly he would experience the Advantages of so evident and distinguished a Change. In order to impress his mind the more, and gain his confidence, Samuel told him of three things which would all befall him in his way home ; at Rachel's Tomb, a place he was soon to pass by, he would meet two men, they would stop him and tell him the Asses were found : Soon after parting with them, he would meet three Travellers on the Road journeying to Bethel, one of them carrying three Kids, another three Cakes, and the third a quantity of Wine, and that each of them would present him with two-thirds of them all ; and lastly, he would meet at the Mountain of God, not very far from home, a Company of Prophets going into Gibeah, and Saul should then and there receive the Spirit of Prophecy himself ; all which came to pass accordingly. Saul arrived at home and was kindly received ; the Asses he told them were found, every other occurrence that had happened to him he most carefully concealed.

Samuel had appointed Saul to meet him in seven days, he would then come to him, and shew him what he should do; at that time Samuel issued out a Proclamation and assembled all the People, the Elders and Heads of the Tribes of Israel to Mizpeh, their Place of Worship, and he here caused them all to present themselves solemnly before the Lord, in the order of their Tribes, and as they proceeded on, the Tribe of Benjamin was commanded to halt, the families of it were all respectively called over, the family of Matri was announced, and Saul, the Son of Kish, publicly nominated "King of Israel." The young Prince modest and pleasingly surpris'd, kept himself out of the way, and conceal'd himself; Samuel enquired for Saul, went in person to find him, led him up before all the People, and presented him to them, "King of Israel." The Air resounded with the loudest huzza's:—"Long Live the King."—"May the King Live for Ever."—The Prophet now with dignity and high propriety represented to him in the hearing of all the People, the Duties, Employment and Nature of his royal Station. All That which he ought to do, and What he ought to avoid. He then caused the Trumpets to be blown, a public Proclamation, and Samuel took the Horn of Oil and annointed him again, now in the presence of
all

all the People, the Heads, the Chiefs, and the Elders of Israel.

Saul attended by a very numerous Retinue, Valiant and high in Honours, walked down to his House at Gibeah.

At this time the City of Jabesh-Gilead, (not very distant from Gibeah,) was closely besieged by the Ammonites, the Inhabitants were on the very brink of losing their City and their Liberties. Naash King of Ammon with haughty insult, issued out his orders commanding every right eye to be thrust out from every Jabusite, a reproachful, lasting, visible and cruel token of his conquest, and their disgraceful subjection. The inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead had only obtained a truce of seven days. Unacquainted with the election of Saul and the revolution in the Government, they instantly availed themselves of the moment, and forwarded an account of their sad situation to the Elders of Israel, Saul ordered the Messengers before him and as soon as he heard their report, He commanded his guard to bring in a yoke of oxen and hew them in pieces, the bodies and limbs thus mangled, he dispatched with the utmost speed throughout all the Tribes, together with this threatening message, whosoever of them should refuse instantly to repair to his standard at Gibeah, and follow

him to the relief of their brethren of Jabesh-Gilead, his cattle should in like manner be hewn in pieces and destroyed.

Awed and alarmed by so spirited a Proclamation from their young Prince, the People instantly assembled, they fled hastily to his standard, and upon casting up their numbers at Bezek, they amounted to three hundred thousand men, besides thirty thousand which were raised in the Tribe of Judah only. Saul had hurried back the Ambassadors to tell the men of Jabesh-Gilead, He and his Army were already on the Road to rescue them; the very morning following His troops surrounded both the City and the Ammonitish Camp; Saul and his gallant men had marched all night, and when He came near the Ammonites Saul made a division of his Army into three different bodies, and at day-break fell on them so furiously, and with such Courage, the Ammonites raised the Siege, with the utmost precipitation fled, leaving behind them their whole Camp and all their spoils.

This famous Enterprize fell out soon after Saul had ascended the Throne, it was their young Monarch's very first Exploit, and gave his People an early proof of his spirited Conduct and intrepidity: Samuel had accompanied him
to

to the Battle, and to add more Vigour to his Government, he now assembled all the People to Gilgal, and there exhibited a public and solemn Inauguration with loud acclamations festivity and rejoicings; and at Gilgal, the Elders and People again proclaimed him " King over all " Israel."

Saul kept this immense army in pay all that year, but the year following he disbanded them, and sent them all to their own homes, except only three thousand chosen men, and he garrisoned two thousand at Mich-mash and Bethel, and one thousand he stationed at Gibeah of Benjamin: the command over these last, Saul gave to his son Jonathan. Jonathan was a valiant young Prince enamoured of glory and the honours of war, to exhibit his courage and military prowess, He led his troops to Geba, and cut off a garrison belonging to the Philistines, this commencement of hostilities threw their whole Nation into a tumult, the Philistines were instantly in arms: Saul sounded the trumpets for War, and let all Israel know, the Philistines, with a numerous Host, were already on full march, and entering the territories of Israel, thirty thousand chariots six thousand horse men, an innumerable company of foot halted over against Mich-mash eastward of Beth-

haven,

haven, and there they pitched their tents and formed a spacious Camp; so formidable a Host struck the Hraelites with terror, in fore dismay they fled and hid themselves in caves and dens, in sawpits and every lurking hole they could find, to add to their distress, the troops that had courage to stay had no arms whatever to defend themselves; except the two swords which Saul and his Son wore, there was neither sword nor even a spear in their whole army. Saul had been directed where to fix his head-quarters, and he was waiting at Gilgal impatient for the arrival of Samuel, the Prophet was very explicit in his orders to wait for his coming to implore success and the blessing of God by sacrifice, Saul had now looked for him day after day, for seven days, during all which time Samuel neither came nor sent, almost all his army had deserted him, they were dwindled away to a handful, Saul was in great consternation and alarm, he feared least the enemy should come upon him and surprize him in so defenceless a state, and before he had sought the Lord in the way He had appointed by sacrifice, on the seventh day therefore Saul ventured himself to slay and offer up a peace-offering and a burnt-offering: The Ceremonies and Sacrifices were scarcely ended when the Prophet arrived Samuel severely reproved Saul for his impatience and

and for what he had been doing; Saul pleaded his pressing necessities and very helpless situation, the Prophet accused him of precipitancy and rashness and strikingly told him, his disobedience to the express command and well known will of God, would be the means of depriving his family from possessing the Kingdom, and the Prophet added, it will be transferred to another, to one more fit for the Government, and more worthy of its honours. Samuel proceeded on to Gibeon, Saul and his little army following him: all he could muster up was six hundred unarmed men, from hence Saul beheld the formidable Host of the Philistines ravaging all his country, and making the most savage depredations; they had formed themselves into three divisions, each of them were plundering and destroying with the most barbarous incursions. One detachment were ravaging Ophrah, another laying waste Beth-horon, and a third were plundering in the Valley of Zeboim.

During these sad and horrid devastations the young Prince Jonathan, unknown to his Father and every body but his armour bearer, as it were by Divine impulse, on his hands and feet, he climbed up the rock and surprized the enemies guard, and he killed twenty of them on the spot,

To

so daring an enterprize put all the rest of them to flight, and struck so dreadful a panic throughout the Host, that they fell upon the swords of one another: Saul saw the confusion, He mustered his men to see who was wanting, and missing Jonathan suspected he must be the cause; the Ark was preparing, Ahiah the High-Priest in all his robes was then enquiring of the Lord. The noise, bustle and alarm grew louder and greater—Saul commanded Ahiah to stop the Ceremonies, He with his few men fell on the trembling troops of the Philistines, who all fled, and Saul's army, now quitting their caves, and their dens, and their lurking-holes again assembled, kept pouring in great numbers to his standard and pursuing the Enemy.

Victorious, and laden with spoils, Saul, and his army marched home, and he soon acquired power to follow up his Conquests, and valiantly to encounter all the neighbouring states who opposed him. Saul fought against Moab, and the children of Ammon, against Edom and the Princes of Zobah, and against the Philistines conquering and returning home in triumph from them all.

Besides Saul's impatience to put a stop to the enquiry of the High-Priest, ordering him to withdraw his hand and retire from the Altar, for
he

he would rush on the Philistine army during their high alarm and confusion, Saul was unhappily guilty of another piece of misconduct; to secure his advantages, and, as he thought, make his Victory more complete, he issued out a proclamation throughout all his army (in order to keep them from falling to plunder) "Curfed be the man that fhall eat before night." Saul's army were fo enfeebled and faint, especially thofe who had been hid in caves and among the rocks, that many of the enemy efaped from them, and the glory of the day was greatly leffened hereby. Jonathan had not heard of the proclamation; faint and hungry in his march through a wood, he eat of fome wild honey and was refreshed, being told of his Father's prohibition, he instantly defifted, but lamented and blamed it exceedingly: "my Father hath troubled the land, or there would have been a much greater flaughter of the enemy. So fâcred was the Oath held by the Ifrae- lites, that an inquiry and detection was foon made, the mode they adopted was a calling of lots, and the lot fell upon Jonathan.: Saul unaffectionately zealous, condemned his Son to die, telling him no tie of kindred or natural affection fhould be preferred before his Oath and folemn Obligation. Jonathan was ftanding alone by Saul, he instantly threw himfelf among the

People, and cried out, " Do not spare me ;—Do not spare me ;—I die gloriously ;—Behold I leave the Hebrews Conqueror : "—The Soldiers surrounded Jonathan, one and all declaring, " Not a hair of his head should be hurt ; " Jonathan hath wrought with God this day. " By this wise manœuvre of the young Prince, he was valiantly rescued by the People.

From among the most valiant and stoutest of all his men, Saul elected his Body-guard ; in his Army he provided for two of his Sons besides Jonathan ; and Abner the Son of Ner, Saul's Uncle, was his Commander in Chief. Sometime after this, on Samuel's intimation and direction, Saul marched with his Army into the Country of the Amalekites, the Orders the Prophet gave Saul were plain and peremptory :

" Smite Amalek, utterly Destroy them, spare them not ; Slay Man and Woman, Infant and Suckling ; Ox, Sheep, Camel and As : "

Saul invaded them at the head of two hundred and ten thousand men ; following his orders, Saul slew them all, except a very few who escaped by flight, and Agag their King, whose beauty and stately presence he so admired, that he was very desirous of saving him alive ; in this he yielded
to

to his own feelings, and disobeyed the Commands of his God. Neither Mother nor sucking Child were spared, but the Cattle were also ordered to be destroyed, and the best from among the flocks and herds they had also saved and brought off. After this famous and successful expedition, Saul returned home in triumph, and with great rejoicings. Samuel went up to meet Saul at Gibeon; the King in high spirits, in the hour of Victory, received the Prophet with great joy, and told him, he had executed all his commission, he had performed the Commandment of God: How is it then, says Samuel, I hear the bleating of the Sheep and lowing of Oxen? Saul, pleading Religion and Piety answered, they were saved for the use of the Altar, to be offered up in Sacrifice: Samuel replied, hear what the Lord said to me this Night;

“ When thou wast mean in thine own sight,
 “ did not I make thee Head over all the Tribes
 “ of Israel? Did not I command thee to destroy
 “ the Amalekites? Wherefore then didst thou not
 “ obey the voice of the Lord.”

Saul strove to justify himself, he laid the blame on the People; the People had saved of the Cattle for Sacrifice: Samuel instantly told him,

“ Obedience was far better than Sacrifice :” and now hear thy doom, O Saul !

“ Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, He hath rejected thee from being King.”

So awful a Prediction roused Saul, he acknowledged his Sin, and most earnestly requested the Prophet's intercession : At first Samuel refused Saul, and offered to go ; Saul caught hold of his garment, and it rent ; Samuel prophetically cried out, “ God has rent the Kingdom from you, and given it to one more worthy.” Saul still importuning the Prophet to honour him before the Elders of Israel, and accompany him to worship God ; Samuel yielded to his very pressing sollicitation and went with him to sacrifice. A while after, the King of the Amalekites was brought before Samuel, the Prophet had enquired for Agag, and the King hoped from so amiable a character, and so merciful a Judge, he should obtain Mercy ; surely (says he) the bitterness of Death is past ; but Samuel answered, “ As thy Sword has made Women childless, so shall thy Mother be childless among Women :” And Samuel himself hewed Agag in Pieces at Gilgal, after which he returned back to Ramah.

The History is now blended with the Life and Achievements of David ; Saul's Melancholly ;
David's

David's introduction to Court; the bloody slaughter of Ahimelec the High-Priest, and much of the remainder must necessarily be told in the History of the Life and Reign of that Prince; where also Saul's sad and horrid persecutions against him are recorded, together with the famous Victory over the Philistine Army, after the Death of their mighty Champion, and the last dreadful and fatal Battle, in which Saul lost his own life, and the lives of three of his Sons, Saul had long suffered under the repeated and distracting horrors of Despair. The Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil Spirit troubleth him. His History exhibits a most natural and very striking picture of Despondency, with much variety and in the strongest colours; It was in Saul evidently the effect of disappointed Ambition and wrong Judgment, wild are his affections, and for ever on the change, from anxiety, grief and despair, to envy, cruelty and jealousy: but such madness, the creature of passion, ambition and vice, could never palliate or cast a veil of innocence or oblivion over his many wanton and barbarous persecutions, and repeated attacks on the life of David, and once upon the life of his own Son; nor can it lessen the guilt of his insatiable fury, with which he glutted himself, on Doeg's impious and most malicious information,

when

when he summoned up from Nob, Ahimelec the innocent High-Priest, and all his Priests and attendants, if possible still more innocent, and unconvicted of any crime he passed upon them a verdict of instantaneous death, and as no executioner was found who would obey the horrid and bloody orders, Saul commanded Doeg himself to butcher them in his presence and before the Court.

Drawing to a close, and the finishing action of his life, Saul under great terror and alarm, led his army over Gilboa, a high mountain to meet the formidable host of the Philistines, and hence he viewed with astonishment their numbers, their immense power and martial prowess. Saul sunk into despondency, He instantly summoned his Priests and commanded them to enquire of the Lord; Saul received no answer; he addressed himself with great earnestness to the Prophets, they were all silent; in perplexity, wildness, and distraction Saul called in his servants, and He says, seek me a woman that has a familiar spirit, and his servants told him, at Endor, a village hard by, there lived a woman well known to be a Sorceress. Saul's army were now encamped, and He at the dead of night changed his raiment, and in disguise accompanied by two servants, stole out of his tent, and secretly walked down to the village, called the
 Woman up

Woman up, entered her house, and Saul besought her to bring up a person he should name to her; the Woman knowing a detection would be death, thought they were laying a snare to entrap her, she positively refused. Saul's over importunity and a sacred oath of safety, which he made her, at length prevailed over her fears, she ventures to enquire who He wanted, Saul tells her Samuel the Prophet; by her deadly arts an evil spirit (as she thought) was brought up, and He personated Samuel, the Woman learnt from him it was the King, and she screamed out, thou art Saul, why hast thou deceived me? fear nothing says the King, what sawest thou? she replied an old man cometh up—what form is he of (says Saul) how is he clad? and she tells him he is covered with a mantle; and he looks like a Priest. The Ghost now became visible—Saul stooped to the ground and bowed himself—He concluded it must be Samuel—the Ghost addresses Saul—why disquietest thou me? Saul answers, a most mighty host were upon him, God had deserted him—the Ghost replied, since God is departed and become thine enemy, why askest thou me? because (says Saul) you have always shewn so tender a concern for my interests. Hear then thy doom O Saul, "God hath rent from thee the Kingdom—it is given to David—thou and Israel shall fall into the hands of the

the Philistines, thou, and thy sons shall be with me to-morrow."

On hearing so tremendous a sentence Saul fainted, he laid on the ground as dead ; after he recovered from his swoon and had been refreshed by food, Saul before day-break returned back to his Camp, and notwithstanding he had been thus acquainted with his fate and what would befall him, Saul never once endeavoured to avoid the stroke of death ; on the contrary, he cast himself with his valiant Sons into the hottest fury of the battle, esteeming it a brave action, in company with them, to die thus gloriously in defence of his People.

In this last sad and fatal overthrow, Saul was mortally wounded, and in several parts of his body ; bleeding, fainting, dying, he requested his armour-bearer to run him through with his sword, unwilling to fall alive the sport and malice of his Enemies ; Saul was refused, his faithful servant trembled at the orders, and Saul is said to have fallen on his own sword, ending his insufferable misery with his life. Three of his Sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchisua were all slain ; and the faithful armour-bearer, struck with a scene of so much horror, now stabbed himself

himself and fell beside his master. The next morning the Philistines in plundering the field and stripping the slain, found the body of Saul, and the bodies of his three sons, and they hung up their armour in the Temple of their God Ashteroth, and the mangled bodies they disgracefully exposed on the walls of Bethshan. The brave and gallant Jabeshites remembering the services of Saul, went secretly by night, cut down the bodies and brought them off, and according to their usual practice, they burnt them, and gave their ashes an honourable burial. The Jabeshites by sound of trumpet proclaimed a seven day's fast to be religiously kept throughout all their City, and a public mourning for Saul.

An Amalekite with his clothes rent, and dust upon his head, fell on his face before David, and paid him homage, he had hastened with the news of the defeat, and arrived on the third day, bringing with him the King's crown and the bracelet which he wore, a confirmation of the truth of his story. At the death of Saul, David wept. He forgot the Enemy and mourned over the man, but most tenderly was he pierced to the heart at the death of Jonathan; and he lamented Israel's sufferings and disgrace.

David rent his clothes, He shewed a lively sorrow, instantly He proclaimed a solemn fast to be religiously kept, and a public mourning throughout his army.

Jonathan's friendship for David, is a perfect and elegant model, truly affecting. He was so disinterested as not only to prefer his friend to himself, but to give up all prospect of honour for his sake, He chose to be a subject, that his friend might be a King, and from affection to David, to incur the anger and deprecation of a furious and jealous parent, and run the risk of his own life, to save the life of his friend, this, and more than this did Jonathan for David, He loved him as his own soul, and no one can read the thoughtful, tender care, and contrivance of Jonathan, for the safety of his friend, or his pious address to God on his behalf, without a tear of pity and emotion : Their well placed confidence and mutual affection, their intimacy notwithstanding the almost insurmountable difficulties attending their meetings, so many renewals of friendship are all highly pleasing: True merit, manly courage, Love and real esteem in two such affectionate friends, are bands of union never to be broken or forgot.

David's celebrated dirge and lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, is a tender greeting, and highly

highly finished picture of sorrow ; it is surely one of the most beautiful elegies ever composed.

Respect and reverence for Saul, and love for Jonathan appear in the strongest colouring, their bravery and the warlike Glory of both are strikingly applauded. Dayid was himself a warrior, generous and noble, He celebrates the praises of an enemy. The Poetic Wish, that Israel's shame and defeat should not be told in Gath and Askelon, the principal Cities of their Conqueror, now in high festivity, dancing and rejoicing, is wonderfully expressive and picturesque, and by describing what was in itself impossible, David pathetically represents his bursts of sorrow and most tender feelings.

Jonathan his friend and the glory of his country is first and uppermost in his thoughts.

1 The Beauty of Israel is slain,
O' Warrior upon thy high places,
How are the Mighty fallen !

2 Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon,
Lest the Daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the Daughters of the uncircumcised
triumph

- 3 Ye Mountains of Gilboa, no dew upon you,
No rain, nor fields, nor fruits for your offering,
There the shield of the Mighty was vilely cast
away.
The shield of Saul, as if unannointed with oil.
- 4 Without the blood of the Warriors,
Without the fat of the Mighty,
The Bow of Jonathan turned not back,
The Sword of Saul returned not empty,
- 5 Saul and Jonathan, in their lives they were
lovely and pleasant,
In their death too, they were not divided:
Than Eagles more swift, than Lions more
strong.
- 6 Ye Daughters of Israel weep over Saul,
He drest you in scarlet, and deck'd your ap-
parel with gold.
- 7 How are the Mighty fallen! O' Jonathan?
O' Warrior! upon thy High Places.
- 8 I am distressed for thee my brother Jonathan,
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;
Thy Love to me was wonderful,
Passing the Love of Women.
- 9 The Mighty, how are they fallen!
And the Weapons of War cast away.

David

David more than once refers to the shame and disgrace of losing the shield, he commanded all his People to commit his Ode to memory, a Funeral Dirge, in which they were all required to be perfect, each one was expected to rehearse it and publicly to sing it, in commemoration of Saul and his beloved Jonathan.

Saul is here celebrated for his warlike prowess, his former victories, his swiftness and strength, and David sheds a tear over his defeat and the indignities offered him after his death, and no one reflection whatever occurs on Saul's cruel persecutions on himself; but the Prophet tells us, Saul was a King given unto Israel in wrath. God was pleased in the beginning of his reign to employ him as an instrument of deliverance to his People, and he gained many signal victories over their enemies, but after his disobedience and that God had rejected him, and commanded David to be anointed in his place, then he shewed himself a haughty, cruel and bloody tyrant, obstinately resisting the well known will and commands of God, holding the sceptre in violence. In wanton barbarity Saul laid his murderous hands on the High-Priest of his God, his Priests and attendants, their wives and children, sucklings at the breast, and even all their cattle, with subtilty and
malicious

malicious fury repeatedly attempting the life of David, and once even the life of his own son, while all the time he was in his own conscience convinced of the innocence, the amiable character and virtuous dispositions of them both.



ON THE
REIGN
OF
ISHBOSHETH.

AT the death of Saul, Abner son of Ner, Commander in Chief over all the Forces of Israel, ambitious himself and envious at David, proclaimed Ishbosheth King of Israel, a son of Saul's who was now forty years of age.

Abner intended to enjoy the power and make the appointments himself, but he thought it prudent that

that Ishbosheth should wear the Crown and assume the title. He therefore conducted the Prince and led his Army over Jordan to Mahanaim and there proclaimed him King over all Israel, putting him in possession of Gilead, Ashur, Ephraim and Benjamin, and the other tribes beyond Jordan.

David was at the same time peaceably and honourably elected King over Judah, and crowned at Hebron, which was then the capital of that Tribe.

The Kingdom thus divided, remained quiet two years. No hostilities had been declared, the subjects of both Princes were Israelites, they were all brethren, and some hostile overture seemed necessary and was expected by both. The River Jordan divided the two Kingdoms, affixing the boundaries to each.

Abner marched his Army nearer to Judah, and he encamped on a spacious plain on the borders of Gibeon, intending a commencement of hostilities. Joab, David's Commander in Chief, led the Army of Judah to meet them, and erected his Tents on the opposite side a celebrated Pool in full front of the Army of Israel.

The

The two Generals; as a trial of skill and military glory, agreed to select out twelve choice young men and let them meet on the plain in view of both Camps and exhibit feats of prowess and warlike manœuvres, a boast of discipline and manly courage. Soon as these brave soldiers met, each one laid hold of his antagonist by the hair of his head, and thrust his sword into his fellow's side, and they fell down together. The four and twenty men lay dead, and they were all of them Benjamites.

A most bloody battle ensued, Abner and his Army were totally routed, Abner himself escaped only by flight, three hundred and sixty of his troops were slain, and only nineteen on the side of David besides Asahel a Brother of Joab's.

After this Victory, David's Army increased every day, Joab grew powerful and formidable, the Army of Israel deserted from Abner, and he became every day weaker. The War continued during the remainder of the life of Ishbosheth, and a little more than seven years from his coronation.

Abner's ambition was noticed with a jealous eye by the King, and a connection he had formed with Rizpah, a concubine of his Father's, enraged Ishbosheth and he now for the first time took

courage to reprove his General, Abner returned it with the haughtiest insult, threatening to transfer the Kingdom from the House of Saul to David, and make him King over Israel and Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba, the two extremities of the Kingdom.

Ishbosheth was terrified and alarmed, He dared not further provoke his General, for he possessed much more interest and power than himself, and he lived in continual fear of him.

Soon after this, Abner sent messengers to David, acknowledging the whole land was his right, Saul's Son (he said) was only an Usurper, and if his Majesty would pardon past offences, both his own and those of all Israel, and receive them into his grace and favour, Abner with the Army of Israel would all swear allegiance to David.

To prevent more bloodshed as they were all brethren, David agreed to make a league with Abner, but one condition He pressed strongly on the General, if thou seest my face, thou shalt bring with thee Michal, my wife, whom Saul her Father had, in order to insult David, married to Phaltiel the Son of Laish.

Michal had been before sent for by David, and Abner was commissioned to demand her, of
her

her present husband, and the General accompanied her himself to the Court of Hebron, with only twenty of his brave soldiers, and presented the Queen to David. Abner and Michal were both of them graciously received, and after a long conference, when his visit was paid, Abner respectfully took leave in order (for the present) to return home, but Joab being told of his going, in the King's name, sent for him back from the Banks of the River Jordan, Joab, met him at the gate of Hebron, and unacquainted with the purport of his conference, and wholly without the King's knowledge, Joab took him aside and stabbed Abner to revenge the death of his brother Afahel.

David was violently enraged with his General, publicly avowed his innocence, pronounced an awful and prophetic curse on Joab, his children and all his family, after which he issued out the orders himself for a general mourning and directed a splendid Funeral, in Martial Pomp, for Abner, with the tokens of lively sorrow and true respect, David himself walked Chief Mourner, He spoke a most pathetic Oration over Abner's grave, and David wept, and all the People wept.

Not long after this solemn event, two Captains in Ishbosheth's Army conspired against the life of

their Sovereign, they procured access to his bed-chamber when He was lain down, in the heat of the day, and there they cruelly murdered him, and then cut off his head. The two Captains escaped privately, fled away with the head to Hebron, and presented it to David, congratulating his Majesty on the death of his Rival. The King instantly pronounced sentence on the two Captains, and ordered them to a public execution, after which their hands and feet were hung up, a testimony of their baseness and trophies of their treason, over a celebrated Pool, and near the public walk and general resort at Hebron.

All the Tribes now assembled, and with the Elders, Rulers and Magistrates they came in a body to make an offer of allegiance, and pay homage to David, and they anointed him a third time, King over all Israel.

His Army now consisted of three hundred and twenty thousand expert Warriors, well armed and men of valour.

David gave orders for the decent interment of the Head of Ishbosheth in the same grave with the body of Abner, his General, in the City of Hebron, where David had built a Sepulchre to his memory. David now made a feast for all his
numerous

numerous Army, a festivity and public rejoicing which lasted during three whole days. All the tribes kept pouring in the greatest plenty of provisions for them all, they thus hospitably encreased the profusion and supported the liberality of their Prince, resolving to bear themselves a part of so immense an expence and prodigality. All the People, far and near, brought in all their stores.

There was a general joy throughout Israel,



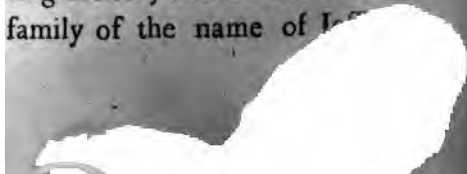
ESSAY VIII.

ON THE LIFE AND REIGN OF DAVID.

CONTAINING

David's Anointing—His Introduction at Court—Victory over Goliath—Promotions in the Army—Friendship with Jonathan—Persecutions from Saul—Marriage with Michal—Conduct to Nabal and Abigail—His Banishment—His manner of living under Achish King of Gath—Burning of Ziklag—Destruction of the Amalekites.

THE Prophet Samuel was ordered to take a journey to Bethlehem, and carry with him his horn of oil and a young Heifer, and he was there to enquire out for a family of the name of I-



When He arrived at the Town, he killed his Heifer, and he offered a part of it in sacrifice, and while they were cooking and dressing the rest, the Prophet goes in quest of Jesse's house and his family, He asks after all his Sons, Jesse called them all in, and caused them to pass one by one before him, Samuel in his own mind pitched upon the eldest, Eliab a brave and comely youth, but He was given to understand, neither of these present was the person intended, the Prophet quite at a loss enquires of Jesse if these were all the sons he had, upon which he was told that there was indeed one more, a stripling, the youngest, and he was now watching the sheep, he would immediately send for him; Samuel invites to his feast, Jesse and all his sons and he appoints the Rulers and Elders of the Town to give them a meeting—partake of his feast, and eat up the remainder of his Heifer. Jesse and all his sons accepted the invitation, and after a cheerful and hospitable meal, in the midst of all his Brethren, the Rulers and Elders of Bethlehem, Samuel took out his horn of oil, and anointed David King of Israel.

The Anointing Speech while he was rubbing in the Oil.

“ Now David I pray thee pursue justice and obey the Commandments of the Almighty. So shall thy

thy Kingdom remain to thee for a long time; and thy house become famous and honourable. Thou shalt moreover vanquish in battle the Philistines; and with whatsoever Nation thou shalt wage war, thou shalt always come off victorious, renowned, procuring to thyself in this life time, great glory and honour, and leaving to Posterity, a name famous for piety and high achievements."

On an event so extraordinary, and unexpected, the Prophet leaves them to make their own reflections, He breaks up the company, and returns home to Ramah.

It is easier to conceive, than to express, the effects this wonderful change instantly wrought, in this ruddy, innocent and very beautiful youth,

He no longer considered himself a shepherd, He was destined to be a King, "The spirit of the Lord came upon David," He became valiant, resolute, wise, fitted for the events that awaited him, the Dignity and Government to which He was advancing. David returned to his flocks, the company parted and retired, awfully impressed with the consecration, and the solemnity of the sacrifice which had preceded it.

Saul's impiety and the reproaches of his conscience, destroyed all his peace of mind, and introduced

duced the sad and gloomy horrors of dejection and melancholy, and his Nobles encouraged the most cheerful scenes and all the charms of music to awake and rouse him from his own reflections. "The spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and he unhappily became his own tormenter, jealous, malicious, envious, cruel.

It was this miserable and dejected state of the King which occasioned David's first introduction to the Court of Saul.

One of the Nobles in waiting had seen a Son of Jesse's. and told the King, He was a sweet youth, that he played delightfully on the harp, a pleasing youth indeed of great courage and highly favored of God. Saul was struck with the character, sends immediately to Jesse, and desired he would let the young shepherd return with his messengers. Jesse was pleased with the notice and with the invitation, he readily obeyed, and according to the custom of the times, he sends by his Son an Ass laden with bread, a bottle of wine and a Kid, a present to his Majesty. David's very charming person, his skill and proficiency in playing, and his unaffected manners soon won upon the affections of Saul, and he appointed him a post in his family, at first one of his body guards, and very soon after the King made him his armour bearer.

David was now twenty years of age, and he continued his places at Court until Saul was recovered from his gloom and melancholy. Jesse then sent a respectful message to Gibeah and requested his Son might now return home, David was his youngest child, he had been long absent, and his father longs to see him, very desirous of his assistance and care of his flocks, Jesse sends to Court three of his Brothers, with a humble petition they might be honoured with an employment there, and supply the place of his Son David. Upon this message, and request of his father, David obtained leave to return to Bethlehem.

The Philistines envious and alarmed renewed their quarrel with the Israelites, and a vast Army encamped in the Valley. Jesse's three Sons had all of them been promoted in the Army, and He sends David to the Camp to enquire after his Brothers, and carry them a present of provisions, and he also sent a present to the Captain of the Regiment, under whose command they served. When David arrived at the Camp, the two Armies had advanced in front of one another, they stood in battle array, and while he was delivering his presents and talking with his Brothers, Goliath of Gath, a Huge Giant, twelve feet eight inches high, armed Cap-a-pee, advancing before the
Philistines

Philistines troops, his enormous size, and haughty threats, were terrifying and horrible, He stood insulting and defying the Armies of Israel, challenging them to rest the decision of the day upon the event of a duel. Goliath had thus, day after day, for forty days, repeated his challenge and his insult. Israel had always fled away in terror, whenever He made his proclamation. Saul himself was greatly afraid, and he had publicly offered a Princely reward to whomsoever would bring him the head of Goliath. David seemed very much inclined to encounter himself this great and mighty Giant, he was a very good mark, and he could always keep out of his way. Eliab his eldest Brother soon discovered his thoughts, and he was very angry with him; and reproved him sharply, accusing him of pride and ambition, proposed his return and satirically asked, who took care of the sheep? David turned away from him, and directs his discourse to another, and enquired about the King's offer and the reward. His bravery and inquisitiveness were soon reported to Saul, upon which David was ushered into the Royal Tent, and he there openly tells Saul, "thy servant will go fight with this Philistine." Saul commended his courage, but he formed very little expectation from so unequal a combat. "Thou art but a child, and he a Man of War from his youth."

David innocently and very modestly told, how he had slain a Lion and a Bear and rescued a lamb from their jaws, and concludes without a doubt, he should in like manner vanquish this uncircumcised Philistine. The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lion and the Bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine, so audaciously defying the Armies of God. Saul overcome by the humble confidence and fortitude of the gallant youth, grew charmed with his bravery and heroism, and he began to hope something from his efforts, "Go says he and the Lord be with thee," Saul with his own hands buckled on his accoutrements and began to equip David for the battle. He put on a helmet of brass upon his head, and covered his body with a Coat of Mail, and David girded his sword over all and he now assayed to move, but so unwieldy and so much in want of freedom and ease, David petitions to be undressed to get rid of his load and confinement, sword and all. Unaccustomed to armour, in his shepherd's frock, with his staff and his sling, he chuses from the brook five smooth stones, and puts them in his shepherd's bag, and advances boldly towards Goliath, the sturdy Warrior seeing a ruddy beautiful youth in a shepherd's dress, with his bag and his staff calls out to him, "am I a dog that thou comest to me with stones and a stick, I will give

" give thy flesh to the fowls of the air and the
 " beasts of the field." David with magnanimity
 replied, " I come to thee in the name of the
 " Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of
 " Israel, whom thou hast defied ; I will smite
 " thee, and take thy head from thee ; and I will
 " give the carcases of the Host of the Philistines
 " to the fowls of the air, and the wild beasts of
 " the earth ; that all may know, the Lord saveth
 " not with a sword and a spear—The battle is the
 " Lords', He will give it into our hands." Goliath
 drew his sword, David ran to meet him, and he
 took out a smooth stone, slang it, and smote the
 Philistine to the ground, He then run forwards,
 stood upon his body, and with Goliath's own
 sword, cut off his head, and presented it to Saul.
 The Philistine Army seeing their Champion fall,
 precipitately fled, and left all their tents and bag-
 gage, and were pursued by Saul with great
 slaughter through the way of Shaaraim, to the
 very gates of their own Cities even to Gath and
 Ekron.

David carried the sword, the huge brazen cap
 and all Goliath's armour to his own tent, and the
 weight of the armour was one hundred and eighty
 nine pounds Troy, and the head of the spear two
 and twenty pounds.

A gallantry

A gallantry and conduct so spirited and heroic, procured David high promotion and advancement in the Army. Saul would not suffer his return home, He made him Captain over the Men of War, and kept him near his own person, promoting him from post to post, yet every advance was obtained by some new exploit, his modest merit, David's own prudence and consummate valour.

A character so distinguishingly amiable together with this last signal Victory procured him the notice, love, and friendship of Jonathan, the eldest Son of the King. He was so charmed with his valour, his innocent and unaffected address to his Father, and his highly pleasing person, that he conceived the tenderest regard and friendship for him. The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David—He loved him as his own soul—and now that He might appear as a King's Son, He pulled off his own robe, and all his clothes, and put them himself on David, and he girt on him his own sword, and presented him with his bow and his military girdle or sash.

Upon all occasions David proved the sincerity of his love and friendship for Jonathan, a reciprocal esteem, a most tender, affectionate regard throughout his life, till a sudden death divided them, at which time it broke out in bursts of sorrow
and

and heart-piercing lamentations, He wrote the most beautiful and pathetic elegy for his friend, and appointed a solemn public mourning and a general fast to be kept by all his Army, on account of the death of Saul, and his beloved Jonathan.

If you would view a picture of affectionate, generous, and disinterested friendship, and see how tenderly, yet manfully to prefer, the safety and interest of your friend, to the safety and interest of yourself; how you may freely give up ambition and royalty, and court a Parent's anger and his frowns, to guard and ward them off another, be yourself a subject, that your friend may be a King; enter into the history of two such affectionate and amiable friends.

David was hitherto advancing higher and higher in the esteem of his Sovereign, the love of the young Princes and the People, every thing went on as heart could wish, and Saul proposed to him an alliance in his family, a marriage with the Princess Royal. The King's gloom and melancholy unfortunately returned, and with its usual attendants, horror, jealousy and distraction. Saul had always commended and publicly approved the warm and tender attachment of his Son, and he had advanced David his friend to a high and distinguished

distinguished Post in his Army, returning back a Conqueror and in triumph to his Capital ; and David marching at the head of his Regiment behind him, all the People ran out in the Towns and Cities through which he passed, in high festivity and joy to meet King Saul, dancing and sportive, they had Tabrets and Pipes, and Ballad-singers and Harps.

“ Saul hath killed his thousands,”

“ David his ten thousands.”

While Saul was listening to the women, He suddenly grew furious with indignation and rage, and ever after even to the end of his life, Saul watched every opportunity to destroy David. It was on the very next day, while in one of his gloomy fits David was playing to him on his harp to divert his melancholy, Saul threw a javelin at him, intending to kill him, and nail him to the wall ; David stepped aside and left the room, and soon after his return Saul flung a dagger at him, and David again withdrew from his presence. Two such signal deliverances increased the jealousy and suspicions of the King, and he plainly saw God had protected David.

After such proofs of deliberate malice and cruelty, Saul could not expect or chuse the daily attendance

attendance of David about his person ; He made him Captain-general of a Regiment employed at a distance, and David tempered his Command with so much kindness and prudence, disciplining and heading his Troops himself, whenever their services were required, that his conduct, judgment and circumspection gained him the notice, esteem and love of all Israel and Judah ; spirited and valiant, a good Commander and highly successful. Saul could but observe how well David behaved, and how much he was beloved, and he dreaded him the more for it. But he now thought it would be wiser, to act less openly and to conceal and blind his intentions respecting him, He therefore determines upon another device to destroy this noble and lovely youth, he is contriving how to ensnare him, and by exalting him high in his family, put him on performing some very dangerous feats of valour ; and Saul sent by his dispatches a proposal to him to marry his eldest Daughter, but he was first to signalize and distinguish himself in an expedition against the Philistines, exposing him to much hazard and requiring great skill and valour : Saul's secret hopes were, that in a post of so much danger David would lose his life among them.

David received the King's message and his
L 1 proposal

propofal very modeftly, with gratitude and humility; but Saul foon altered his mind, and He married Merab, his eldeft Daughter, to Adriel, a Meholathite, no doubt a prefent mortification, and an unpleafant proof of Saul's infincerity.

The next contrivance of the King's was, to publifh to his Servants and Courtiers, and by them to inform David, he intended Michal his fecond Daughter for his Wife; but Saul bid them tell him, He firft expected a frefh proof of his valour; an attack upon the Philiftines, and a deftruction of at leaft an hundred of their Troops. The Hebrews were fo constantly at war with that Nation, that an opportunity foon offered, and he courageoufly flew two hundred Philiftines.

Saul had now no excufe whatever, He had made a free offer, one only condition required, and that more than fully complied with, his fecret hopes are, he may hereby lay a fnare for his life, and Saul gives his fecond Daughter to David; Michal indeed was faid to have been in love with him, and her affection and contrivance, as well as her Brother Jonathan's, was of very great advantage to him, and the faving of his life. David had not long returned to Court before another javelin was ftruck at him, and it pierced into the wall behind him; He goes home to his own
Houfe

House and Saul pursued him there and planted a Guard round it; his faithful Wife at midnight contrived to let him down from a window, a spot the Soldiery could not surround. Early in the morning a detachment entered the House with orders to murder him, and Michal frames a story :—

“ David was in his bed, he was very sick and in a fever; she invited the men to the Chamber-door, points to the bed, and she had put into it the figure of a man, and covered it closely up with the bed-clothes.”

Michal then sent them back to her Father,—the Soldiers were commanded instantly to return and bring away bed and all. The stratagem was now obliged to be discovered, and Saul grew quite furious with rage and disappointment.

David made the best of his way to Ramah, and took shelter under the roof of his pious and very worthy friend the Prophet; Samuel soon suspects his safety in Ramah, and He accompanied him to Naioth, a pleasant Village, and the School of the young Prophets, not very far from the City. Saul sent dispatches to Ramah, and to Naioth, but the messengers were dispossessed of all power to hurt David, or even to come near him, instead of exe-

cutting their orders, they on hearing the young
 Prophets singing Divine Hymns and praising
 God, seem themselves endowed as it were with
 prophetic rapture and devotion ; thus without
 executing their Commission they returned back
 to Saul. The King dispatched instantly more
 messengers, a second and a third time, but with no
 better success, upon which Saul set out himself for
 Naioth, and He also felt a Spirit which totally
 disqualified him and he seemed to be proph-
 etizing ; Saul laid aside his robes and his ensigns of
 royalty, and all the whole day he lay down on
 the ground uncovered and all the following night ;
 by which means David had time to make his
 escape from Ramah unpursued by Saul or his
 messengers. During this perplexity of strange
 events, Jonathan his beloved friend, delighted
 David with an affectionate private visit and in-
 terview, and when they parted they exchanged the
 kindest endearments, and gave each other the
 strongest proofs of inviolable friendship, and the
 tenderest regard and concern for each other's
 safety and happiness ; a very short time after this
 interview Jonathan exposed his own life, to save
 the life of his friend, he found him out by a stone
 (a particular mark agreed upon) just time enough
 to secure his flight to Ahimelek the High Priest
 at Nob, from whom he obtained some refresh-
 ment

ment for himself and his small party, and upon asking him if He could furnish him with arms of any kind, he was presented with the sword of Goliath, and David girt it on, and fled away to Achish King of Gath; he made a very short stay with this Prince, as both him and his character were well known to the Philistines; the Nobles and Magistrates came immediately in a body and reminded the King of the famous Song—

“ Saul had killed his thousands,

“ David his ten thousands.”

It was at the Court of Achish, under his great perplexities, David was reported so well to have acted the part of a madman, in order to excite their pity or their contempt, and the better to secure his personal safety and get away from Gath; under such circumstances, and suspicious appearances, the Philistine King had no wish to keep him.

From hence David and his few men went and concealed themselves in the Cave of Adullam.

Saul was sorely disappointed when he had heard of David's escape, and his first fury and rage fell on his Son Jonathan, and afterwards upon all his Servants. Just at this time Doeg arrived in great haste

haste from Nob and brought the news; Ahimelech the High-Priest had enquired of the Lord for David, and he had furnished him with provision and arms; in Saul's hasty and inconsiderate rage he orders up the High-Priest and all his Family and Servants and he murdered them all, innocent and ignorant of having offended, the Priests and Attendants were eighty-five in number, and they all, in their Priestly garments, lay butchered at his feet; but Saul's insatiable fury is yet unsatisfied, he sent away to Nob, and he there put to the Sword all the Men, Women and Sucklings, Oxen, Asses and Sheep and all the Cattle of the place. Orders so bloody and despotic Saul found a great difficulty in getting executed; the Officers in waiting, his Guards and all his Servants shuddered and drew back at the thought of murdering the High-Priest of their God, an innocent and good man, and his Priests and his Family if possible still more innocent; Saul fixing his eyes on Doeg the wicked informer, commanded him to be their Executioner, and he with his base confederates butchered them all themselves. Only one of all the High-Priest's Family escaped, this was his Son Abiathar and he fled for protection to David. David comforted him all he could, kindly promised Abiathar every assistance in his power, and should he ever have the appointment,

Abiathar

Abiathar should himself be High Priest in the room of his Father. Jesse and his Wife and his Children, his Household and Relations, now repaired to David's Camp, and also the Prophet Gad, they were all flying from the fury of Saul. Four hundred discontented and indigent persons also joined him, and they all marched together to the land of Moab; David here gained protection and a promise of safety for his Parents, Relations, and Friends, and leave for them to stay in the Country; but He and his Men went on to the Forest of Hareth, in the land of Judah, and from thence into the Wilderness of Zith, and his little Army were soon encreased to six hundred.

Amidst the Caves, Dens and Rocks, he here sheltered himself and them by day, and here his beloved Jonathan again finds him out and visits him, affectionately enters into an Alliance with him, and by every possible means, encourages, comforts and supports David, for he loved him as he loved his own soul. In order to gain favour and credit with Saul, the Ziphites sent a Messenger to him, and informed him of David's retreat, and upon hearing of this Discovery, David marched all his Men to Moan, and there Saul pursued him, and while he was pitching his Tents over against him, and laying a plan to encompass him

him and surround his little Army, Messengers came running in great haste to the camp of Saul; the Philistine Army had entered Judæa and were already ravaging all the Towns and Cities they passed through.

Saul marched his Troops immediately to oppose them, and as soon as ever they were gone, David removed with his Men to Engedi, and concealed himself and his little Army amongst its strong holds, and rocky Caverns. As soon as Saul had drove back the Philistines, he followed him here with three thousand Men, and again encamped around him.

Saul was once in the very same Cave with David and his Men whispered him, the Enemy is in your hands, put an end to your troubles; David seemed to listen to them, and he drew near to Saul, and cut off the Skirt of his Robe, and then drew back to permit his escape unhurt, and when Saul had got to a safe Distance, David prostrate on the Ground, in the most dutiful and respectful manner, called out to Saul and reasoned the case. How unworthily founded were all his suspicions of him? See the signal proof he had just now given him, how much his Soul abhorred the crimes for which he was so unjustly and cruelly persecuted. This humble and affecting

fecting speech, and backed with the infallible testimony of the skirt of the Robe, which henow held up, melted Saul into tears, tender and sorrowful; David now gained his ear and adds—

“ I am a well-wisher to thee and thy House,
 “ why goest thou about to kill me? wouldest thou
 “ have thus dealt with me? had I fallen into thy
 “ Hands, wouldest thou have let me escape?
 “ When I cut off this Skirt could not I have cut
 “ off thy Head?”

Such proof, such candour, modesty and frankness astonished Saul, He acknowledged David's superior merit, and He cried out—

“ You alone are worthy to be set on the Throne
 “ of Israel.” Saul wept aloud—

“ Thou art more righteous than me, the Au-
 “ thor of good to me; I, of evil and calamities
 “ to thee; I am persuaded the Kingdom will be
 “ thine. God will give it thee; now swear to me
 “ thou wilt not cut off my Seed after me, nor
 “ bear in remembrance the injuries I have done
 “ thee.”

And David under his sad necessities did swear
 unto Saul.

M m

David

David went up to the Strong Hold of Mashe-ron, Saul and his Army returned home to Gibeah. David suspected Saul's sincerity, and removed his little Army further from the neighbourhood of Engedi, towards the Wilderness of Paran, near Carmel, in the Tribe of Judah.

The wise, spirited and noble conduct of their General, kept all his men under the strictest discipline; wherever they were marched they proved a safe-guard to the Inhabitants, being never allowed to plunder or rob them of any thing; in reward for their watchfulness and forbearance, the necessaries for subsistence were very usually given them. Nabal, a rich and opulent Carmelite, the Lord of the Country, was sent to by David in a most respectful manner, He was in great want of provision and necessaries, and he gave orders to ten of his young men to wait upon Nabal, and deliver him a modest, courteous and obliging message, his Army was in present want and they were sent to request a supply; at Carmel it was now a time of festivity and Nabal was feasting his sheep-shearers when the young men arrived; the haughty and brutish Carmelite railed, insulted and abused them, and the young men returned back empty to David: Nabal's Servants ran and told their Mistress, and they spoke so favourably

avourably of the behaviour of the young men, and of David their Master and his whole party, that the prudent good Wife was quite afraid of the consequences, and ashamed at her heart of the conduct of Nabal; without his knowledge she orders the Asses to be saddled, and hastened to collect all the stores she could heap up and procure, then she mounts one Ass herself and those that were laden all follow her, and she met David and all his men coming down the narrow passes of the Mountain to assail her Husband. Abigail instantly dismounted her Ass, fell prostrate on her face before David, and unaffectedly addressed him—

“ Thy handmaid saw not the young men whom
 “ thou sentest, I pray thee to pardon me, forgive
 “ the trespasses of thy hand-maiden, and accept of
 “ the presents I have brought.”

So prudent, humble and so modest a Speech had its proper influence on David, he was quite charmed and delighted with her behaviour and accepted all her presents; but David told her, he was then on his road to destroy the House of Nabal, and before to-morrow's light. Abigail joyfully and respectfully delivered her cargo, unloaded her Asses, humbly took her leave of David and returned home. Nabal, riotous and
 M m 2 drunken,

drunken, knew nothing of her absence, and he was now quite unfit to be told the occasion. Abigail informed him of it all, the next morning. Upon hearing the story of his Wife, and reflecting on the escape, and on his own behaviour and want of humanity, his Heart fainted within him, Nabal became lifeless as a stone, and lived only a very few days afterwards.

David was told of the Death of Nabal, and he sent a messenger to Abigail and made her an offer of marriage; Abigail modestly answered—

“ I am my Lord’s handmaid, and not worthy of so great honour; let me be his Servant and wash the feet of my Lord’s Servants ”

But she arose and accompanied the messengers who conducted her to David and he married her. David had also married another Wife of the City of Abifarus, for Saul had given Michal, David’s Wife, to another Husband, a Son of Laish, of the City of Gethla.

Saul received another message from Ziph; David was again in their Territories, and in case He would come with his Army and assist them, they would be sure to apprehend him; Saul selected out three thousand men, and set out on his march.

march to seek David; the Night coming on, Saul pitched his Tents at Sifela, a Mountain seven miles from a City, and the spot on which the Prophet Habakuk was buried.

David soon heard of Saul's new expedition against him, and he sent out his Spies to learn where he was; they very soon returned and told him, Saul was marching his Army to Sifela; at midnight David sallied out with only two companions, and he climbed up the Mountain, saw all their Tents, and he goes into Saul's, which he knew by a spear which stood near it, and Saul was fast asleep in his bed. Abishai his companion would fain have murdered Saul, but David prevented him — "He is the Lord's anointed."

And David brings away a Cruse of water which stood by his bed-side, and also the Spear from the door of the Tent, and unperceived by any body, he slipped away from the Camp and mounted the Hill, when he had got at a safe distance, and yet where he could be heard, he hollers out loudly to Abner the Captain-general and waked him out of his sleep. Abner cries out, "who are you?" and David answers, "I am Jesse;" how comes you, a General in so high

high a Post, to guard your King so badly ; as the Lord liveth, thou oughtest to die : See here the Cruse of water which stood by his bed, and the Spear from the door of his Tent ; what punishment do you deserve ? While they were talking Saul awoke, and he well knew the voice of David, and he came to the door of the Tent, and having learnt he had been by his bed-side, and carried off the Cruse and the Spear, He calls out to David himself—

“ I am firmly persuaded that thy love and
 “ esteem must be very great, for thou couldest
 “ with all the safety and secrecy imaginable have
 “ cut me off, and Saul intreated David to go back
 “ with him to his House, no more mischief should
 “ ever be devised against him.”

David desired him to send a messenger for his Cruse and his Spear, adding—

“ May the righteous God judge between thee
 “ and me ; the power was again in my hands to
 “ have slain thee, yet I restrained myself from
 “ it”.

The prospect of a Crown would not tempt David to a base, disloyal and treasonable action to obtain it. David did not chuse after this to continue

tinue longer in the land of Israel, thought it prudent and more safe even to withdraw into the Country of the Philistines; upon this He went again to Achish, Son of Maach, King of Gath; Achish received him, and all his men, with great kindness and hospitality, providing for them all, and he assigned a convenient place and a part of the City where they could live by themselves. David dwelt here with his two wives Achinæa and Abigail, and Saul came no more himself, nor sent any party of Soldiers ever after to molest him.

As his residence was within the City Walls, David did not altogether like it, he gratefully acknowledged the King's kindness, and petitioned his Majesty, to allot him a place to himself in the Country at some little distance, assigning as a reason, he knew his present situation must be very troublesome to him, and a great burden and expence to the State. Achish appointed him a small Town called Ziklag, David lived here four months and twenty days, and by making excursions into the enemy's provinces round about him, He brought off Camels and Affes and much spoil, one half of all which He always presented to Achish.

When David and his Men were employed in one of their excursions, the Amalekites watched their
their

their opportunity and beset Ziklag, they carried off Achinæa and Abigail, David's two Wives, his Family and all the Women, Children and Cattle of the place, and after having plundered every thing, they burnt the Town to ashes. When David, and his Men, and some few inhabitants of the place returned, and found Ziklag burnt to the ground, and not a Soul left to give them the least intelligence; they were all very angry with David, accusing him as the Author of all their distress. David was himself perplexed and in great consternation, and he applied to Abiathar, the Son of the High Priest, and asked him to enquire of the Lord. David wept aloud, he rent his clothes, and all his Men wept bitterly; the enraged inhabitants were for stoning him to Death, while David was thus sorrowing, hope and confidence in God alone supported him; He had ordered Abiathar to put on the Ephod and the High Priest's dress, and He now returned with orders to David, to pursue the Enemy; he would surely overtake them and recover all. David and his Men immediately set out, and they met a poor Egyptian, almost starved to death, and David fed and comforted the poor Man, and when he had strength to tell him, David found he was a Servant to one of those who had plundered and burnt the Town of Ziklag;

Ziklag; his Master had left him on the road sick. David now took him, with him, as a Guide, and he conducted him to the place where the Amalekites had halted; David found them all eating and drinking, rejoicing and dancing over all the great spoils they had taken. In revelry and high jollity, thus all unarmed, they were taken by surprize; terrible and strange was the slaughter, while at table, eating and drinking, many had their heads chopt off, their bodies remained sitting, some were half asleep and they awaked to die; in the action of lifting the mug, the arm and the mug were sent off together; and with a second stroke the man. Savage was the scene, the food and the blood gushing out in a torrent; from one o'clock in the morning until the evening, horrible and bloody was the slaughter, four hundred only of the young men had made their escape and rode away on Dromedaries, all the rest were every one cut off. David recovered all the spoils they had taken, his two Wives and the wives of his men. and the children, and the cattle, after which he and his men marched back to Ziklag, with a large booty which he liberally divided among his neighbours and friends.

The prudence, manly courage, and resolute conduct of the young Prince will now all of them

interest you much more. His affairs brighten up, and take a more favourable turn, the death of Saul which now happened, was an event which opened to him a fair, very natural, and easy ascent to the throne of Israel.



ESSAY

E S S A Y IX.

CONTINUATION OF THE L I F E A N D R E I G N

O F

D A V I D.

Saul's Defeat, his Death, and his Sons—David proclaimed at Hebron King of Judah—Marriage with Maacah, Daughter of the King of Geshur—Victory over Ishbosheth, King of Israel—Michal brought back by Abner—Abner's Death, and Military Funeral—Conspiracy and Murder of Ishbosheth—David proclaimed King over all Israel—Jerusalem besieged and taken—David's Residence, Palace, Armory, Riches—Regulation of his Family and Household—Signal Victories over the Philistines, Moab, Hadadezer, Zobah, Beth, and Berothai—Magnificent Presents from Toi King of Amath—Removal of the Ark to the house of Obed-edom—A second Removal to Jerusalem—Solemn Procession with Sacrifices—David's Ambassadors disgraced by Ammon—War with the Ammonites—Siege of Rabbah.

N n a

L I F E

L I F E A N D R E I G N

O F

D A V I D.

DAVID had been returned only two or three days from the slaughter of the Plunderers of Ziklag. when a young Amalekite with his clothes rent, and his face smeared, and earth upon his head, fell prostrate on the ground before him and paid him homage. David struck with the object and his distress, asks whence he came? and why so sorrowful? The Hebrews were totally routed, a most bloody slaughter, thousands of the slain covered the field, Saul valiantly fought, Saul was desperately wounded, bleeding and exhausted he put his sword to his breast, and had no strength to thrust;

thrust; he commanded his armour-bearer to assist him, he trembling and faint refused to obey, distracted at the horror of falling alive in the hands of his enemies, He prayed me to give his last wound, and I yielded to his importunity, his three sons had rushed into the hottest battle; determined on death, Jonathan, Aminadab and Melchisusa resolutely fell among the slain. David now lost in grief and astonishment could hear no more, the name of his beloved Jonathan, had struck him quite senseless. The young Amalekite had himself stript off the emblems of royalty from the body of Saul, and he delivered up the crown and the royal bracelets he had brought. He told them, before he left the field, the armour-bearer pierced to the soul at a sight so horrible, fell upon his own sword, there was not one of the King's Guards, officer or man escaped, every soldier lay bleeding and dead.

David rent his clothes, he put on sackcloth, all his little army follow the example of their General, they wept aloud, the trumpets were ordered to sound, a general fast proclaimed, and days of sorrow and humiliation.

The young Amalekite, who brought the news, was ordered to a public execution, he had lifted
up

up his hand against the Lords anointed, a treason David never would forgive, though it was the purchase of a crown; by stripping off from Saul the ensigns of his royalty, he looked forward to the prospect of reward, and it was always his design, to present them all, to David.

Respecting Saul, David forgot the Enemy, and mourned over the loss of the man, once his patron, once his friend, the distresses of his Countrymen he most feelingly bewailed, but the sad fate and early death of Jonathan, had melted all his soul into tenderness and sorrow, he could only compose lamentations and elegies in his praise, and there is nothing so eloquent and passionate, no effusions of heart-piercing grief, which so much exhibit the charms and richness of genius, and are so feelingly adapted to perpetuate his love and friendship for ever.

As soon as the Days of fasting, mourning and humiliation were over, David again commands the High-Priest Abiathar to put on his Ephod and Pontifical habit, and enquire of the Lord where he should go, and He was directed to Hebron, which was at that time the Capital City in the tribe of Judah, Jerusalem was in the possession of the Jebusites, and David with his wives, his children, his household, his men and their respective families,

lies, went up to Hebron, and they there met a peaceful reception, and a hearty welcome throughout the City and its neighbourhood.

The Elders, Rulers, Magistrates and all the Tribes assembled, they waited on David and they all paid him homage. Great multitudes here resorted to him, and publicly proclaimed him, and anointed him King over Judah. David was now thirty years of age.

At Mehanaim, Abner Commander in Chief over the Army of Saul, proclaimed Ishbosheth, a Son of Saul's, now forty years old, King of Israel. During the space of seven years the Kingdoms continued thus divided.

The Jebusites, with zeal and courage, had rescued the bodies of Saul, and his three Sons from the Walls of Bethshan, where the Philistines had so ignominiously hung them, and according to the custom of their City, had first burnt their bodies, and then honourably interred their ashes. The first act of David's reign, was, to dispatch a message of thanks, a respectful acknowledgment to Jabeſh-Gilead, commending their bravery and loyalty, and at the same time notifying his election by the tribe of Judah, and his ascent to the Throne. David now entered into a new connection and marries Maacah Daughter of Talmaj,

Talmai, King of Geshur, (a part of Syria) and by her, David had born to him Absalom and Tamar. At the expiration of two years, Abner passed the River Jordan, it ran between the territories of Judah and Israel and divided them. There was a large Pool called Gibeon, on one side this Pool encamped Abner and the Army of Israel, on the other side of the Pool, Joab, David's Captain-General, pitched his tents and led the Armies of Judah.

As yet, between the two Monarchs no war had been declared, no hostilities commenced, they were all Israelites, and some hostile overture became necessary. The Generals on both sides, entered into a very singular treaty, to order out from each Army, twelve brave men, and they were to meet on the plain, in full view of both Armies, and exhibit proofs of Military skill and warlike manœuvres.

As soon as ever they had marched within reach of one another, every man took his antagonist by the shoulder, and sheathed his sword in his body. The four and twenty brave soldiers all laid dead on the plain. A most fierce and bloody battle ensued. Abner and the Army of Israel were totally routed. The General himself escaped only by flight. Joab pursues them most rapidly until sunset,

sun-set. they had now entered the Wilderness of Gibeon, and it was here, a party of Benjamites, availing themselves of a rising ground, rallied furiously under Abner, bloody was the contest, Abner weary at his soul of fighting, sent a flag of Truce to Joab, we are all Brethren, why so horrible a slaughter? Joab commanded the Trumpets to sound a retreat. Abner and his men took their way to Mehanaim, and Joab marched his Army back to Hebron. On the side of David, only nineteen were killed, besides Asahel a brother of Joab's, but a much greater slaughter on the side of Israel. Every day David and the men of Judah, grew stronger and stronger, Ishbosheth daily weaker, but the war continued until his death.

David had applied to Ishbosheth, requiring him to send over to him his wife Michal, whom Saul in David's exile, had married to another.

Abner, the Captain-General, obtained an order from the King, to demand her of Phaltiel her present husband, and convey her over to Hebron. Abner accompanied only with twenty of his brave soldiers, attended Michal on her journey, passed with her over Jordan, and Abner presented her himself to David. They were both honourably and most graciously received. After making a

league with David, and Abner already set out on his journey back, Joab entered the City returning home in triumph from pursuing the Philistines, and when he was told of Abner's visit, the General grew jealous, and on being introduced to the King, he rudely reproved him, and then hastily sent a message, in the King's name, and brought Abner back from the well of Sirah,

Joab met him at the gate of Hebron, there took him aside, and smote him under the fifth rib. Abner was instantly dead, and thus Joab was revenging the blood of Asahel his brother, and riding himself of a very dangerous adversary.

When the news was brought to Court, David was seized with indignation and the deepest distress; before all his People He most solemnly called God to witness his innocence, He was no ways accessory to the murder of Abner, perfectly unacquainted with the dark designs of Joab; upon his General, and upon all his family and relatives, David pronounced a prophetic and most heavy curse. He assembled his Army, and enjoined them all to march in military pomp, as mourners, before the Bier of Abner, with the liveliest sorrow, tears and loud lamentations, their Clothes rent, ashes on their heads and all in sack-cloth. David, in the same dress, with all the solemn tokens

tokens of real grief, walked chief-mourner, following the corps.

In mournful procession, and with all these martial honours, amidst the sighs and lamentations of the Army and the People, the Elders, the Magistrates and their Prince, they buried Abner in Hebron, David composed a funeral elegy, spoke himself the Oration over his grave, and he fasted for Abner until sun-set.

Such a generous, and unaffected shew of grief, was noticed and greatly revered by his subjects, it gained him their respect and affection, they had ocular demonstration of the most tender feelings, and witnessed the very amiable disposition and liberality of their Prince.

Baanah and Rechab, two General Officers in Ishbosheth's Army, as Abner was dead, and the Kingdom greatly weakened, formed a conspiracy against the King, and they came to his house at mid-day, when he was lying on his couch, and they smote him under the fifth rib, and then cut off his head; the two officers made their escape, and unperceived fled with it to Hebron, they requested an audience, and presented it to David, submissively paying him homage, and venturing to

express their congratulations on the death of his Competitor.

The King's stern look struck them both with horror, such treasonable conduct David instantly condemned and discouraged, he refused to be served by treachery and murder, though he might reap from them the most signal advantages. On Baanah and Rechab, David pronounced sentence of death, signed a warrant for their immediate execution, and after the custom with traitors, ordered their hands and feet to be cut off, and hung up in a place of publick resort, a testimony of their baseness and trophies of their treason.

David now gave orders for the head of the King to be decently, and with funeral Honors interred in the same vault with the corps of Abner his General, and David had there built a Sepulchre to his memory.

The King had now reigned seven years and a half in Hebron, and he had six sons born to him there.

On the death of Ishbosheth, all the tribes of Israel assembled, and they first forwarded Ambassadors to Hebron, and afterwards the Elders, Heads, and Magistrates came themselves and
made

made a league with David, and paid him homage. They then blew the trumpets, and publickly proclaimed him King over all Israel.

. Of expert Warriors completely accoutred, the number amounted to three hundred and twenty thousand.

David received all his People, the Chiefs of the Tribes, and the Rulers of Israel with hilarity and joy. He feasted them all at Hebron three days, not only the neighbouring Tribes, but even very distant ones, brought in all their stores, a profusion and plenty almost incredible, the People ambitiously joining in the expence and hospitality, besides bread and meat and meal, immense cargoes of figs, bunches of raisons, wine, oil, oxen, and sheep in abundance.

“ There was Joy in Israel.”

The tribes had unanimously elected David, King over all Israel, a brave Man, a good Soldier, a fortunate Commander, of strict integrity, moderation and liberality, on whom they could confide, and under whose protection and good government, they had the surest prospect of lasting security and happiness. God himself had chosen and anointed David, and Samuel the Prophet, whom they loved and venerated, had himself
given

given them the fullest assurance of his appointment and establishment.

Jerusalem was the ancient City of the Jebusites, a nation whom God had expressly ordered the Hebrews to exterminate, and in the division of the land, by lot, to the twelve Tribes, it had been assigned to Benjamin. At the time when David ascended the throne, this City and its strong fortresses were in their possession; David in high spirits, with a numerous and powerful Army, and a valiant Commander, was encouraged to undertake some hazardous enterprize, and He led his troops to Jerusalem, the inhabitants shut up their gates, and by way of contempt placed on their walls and ramparts, the blind, the decrepit and the lame, and called out to David,

“ Verily thou shalt not come in hither, assuredly the blind and the lame shall keep thee out.”

The insult exasperated the King, and He commanded the siege to be vigorously set about, they began battering down the Suburbs, and soon became masters of the lower City, and now to animate and inspirit his men, David offered a high encouragement and reward by proclamation throughout his Camp, whosoever should have

courage

courage to get up to the gutter, mount the rampart, and become master of the Tower (smiting the Jebusites, the blind and the lame, whom David's soul hateth) should be Captain-General over all the Forces of Israel. It was Joab himself, that bold and intrepid Hero, who climbed up the gutter, mounted the rampart, and sword in hand attacked the Enemy, beat them off the Tower, and possessed himself of the strong Hold of Zion. On its highest summit, Joab calls out aloud to David, and claims his reward.

And David appointed Joab, Commander in Chief over all the Armies of Israel.

After the reduction of Jerusalem David removed to it with all his Court, and made it his constant residence. He built him a magnificent Palace, and Hiram King of Tyre, hearing much of his fame and settlement at Jerusalem, sent Ambassadors thither to congratulate him, formed a friendly alliance with David, and liberally furnished him with Cedar trees, timber, various articles for his buildings, and a great number of artificers, as the Israelites were principally farmers and graziers, unless they were employed in the duties of the Camp and the exercises of war.

The thirtieth Psalm is an elegant and sublime Ode, wrote by David as a consecration, and dedication of his Palace.

David's

David's prosperity was every day upon the increase, like a swelling stream enlarging its progress, his riches and his honours were advancing greatly, and when his royal Palace was finished and he had brought all his family into it, he settled and established his household, wisely and diligently inspected into all his servants and attendants, and regulated his whole Court. David was desirous of holding up his own conduct, as an example and pattern of religious order, and virtuous emulation to his People, his Household, his Children and his Army. His Officers were all of them men of principle, honour, of undaunted courage and sobriety.

The History and wise regulations of his family, are recorded in the hundred and fifth Psalm. An Ode highly honourable to his memory, as a virtuous Sovereign, and a good man.

David next employed himself in surveying and giving orders respecting the City, He greatly enlarged Jerusalem and beautified it, formed wide and regular streets, built Palaces for the young Princes and his Nobles, He erected a high Tower in a celebrated fortress called Millo, a royal Palace on a rising ground, and built a magnificent Armory, and hung up in it a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men distinguished for their bravery, and warlike conduct.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem became henceforward the Capital of the whole Kingdom, and the royal residence of all his successors, but its peculiar honour was, it being eminently called the City of the Great King, the City of God, in Salem was his Tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion. Jerusalem the Holy City. David now gloried, God had exalted him King over Israel, to make his People prosperous, happy, and victorious. God had established his Kingdom.

After he had busied himself some years in these publick undertakings, and he had accomplished them all, David full of patriotic zeal, composed the eighty seventh Psalm: "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion—of Zion it shall be said, this, and that man was born in her: and the Highest himself shall establish her". David had now completed his designs, built his Palaces, beautified and enlarged his City, and provided largely for its security.

The Philistine neighbours, and other Kingdoms round about, alarmed at his conquests, his high exaltation and prosperity, grew jealous, and reasonably suspected, he would soon extend his arms and invade their territories; they made therefore great preparations, encamped with their Armies in the valley of Rephaim, and by way of boast

and a shew of their readines, marched in great numbers through Judæa, and boldly laid siege to the town of Bethlehem, and as soon as they became masters, placed a strong garrison within it. David had no notice whatever of their intentions, no time to intercept their march, or make resistance, He and his Nobles thought it most safe and prudent to retire to a neighbouring fort, the strong Hold and cave of Adullam, and there assembled all his Army. Abiathar was arrayed in his Pontifical Habits, and the King, by means of the High-Priest, devoutly applied to God, the answer was brought him here.

“ Go instantly, pursue the Philistines, you shall
“ come off victorious”.

Confident and thus encouraged, David overtook them at Baal-perazim, and obtained a complete victory. The Philistines fled and left their Gods, David and his men (according to the command of God) committed them all to the flames. Enraged and distressed for their Images and their Gods, with fresh forces and new allies, the Philistines were now seen spreading themselves again in the valley of Rephaim, David boldly met them, obtained a second victory, and pursued them from Geba, even unto Gazer, and the very gates of their Cities,

Encouraged

Encouraged by his successes, his Army thus inspirited, and an enemy to sloth and inaction, David now extended his conquests over other neighbouring Nations around him, by all which he greatly encreased his own power and riches, and by making them tributary, and less formidable, he established more lasting peace, with many blessings to himself, his subjects and posterity. David marched a powerful Army against Moab, his valiant troops conquered, and put to the sword, two thirds of all the forces of the Moabites, and he laid the Kingdom under an annual tribute to Israel. He then entered other neighbouring Kingdoms, and encountered Hadadezer, Son of Rehob, King of Zobah, and he fought him on the plain, near the banks of the river Euphrates, twenty thousand Infantry, and seven thousand Cavalry were put to the sword, a thousand chariots were taken, one hundred of which the King ordered to be reserved for his own use, and directed that all the rest should be burnt.

In this last expedition, and victory over Hada-
dezer, David gave great offence to Syria, the
King of Zobah was his faithful ally and bosom
friend, and to revenge his quarrel, and the Princes
disgrace, the Syrian King, at the head of a formi-
dable Army, set out from Damascus, to meet the
Conquero

Conqueror and engage him in person. The Syrian Army was almost all of it cut to pieces, the Hebrews slew twenty thousand in the field, and the rest escaped only by flight; David close at their heels, drove them back, even to the gates of their Capital, and imposed a yearly tribute on Syria.

In this last exploit, David brought home with him a number of Golden quivers and arrows of gold, and he hung them up, as ornaments, in his Armory, and dedicated all his rich spoils to the service of God.

In the hour of Victory, encouraged by his successes, David marched with his Army against Betah, and Berothai, two famous and capital Cities of Adrazer, valiant and powerful, enjoying the favour and protection of his God, David laid siege to them, became master of both, and laden with his immense spoils, returned in triumph to Jerusalem, amidst the general joy and acclamations of his People.

Toi King of Amatha, a neighbouring Prince, sorely alarmed at these many signal victories, and David's approach so near to the borders of his territories, collected together all his rich vessels of gold and silver, very costly and of most
curious

curious workmanship, these with other noble and valuable presents, the King sent by his Son Joram, with compliments of congratulation to David on his late glorious victories, and made a proposal to him of a league of amity. David accepted all his presents, entered into a friendly alliance with the King of Amatha, courteously and hospitably entertaining his Son at the Court of Jerusalem.

David had forwarded an Army into Idumea, his Generals had been all victorious, and now, on their return, came home laden with spoils. The King placed a strong garrison on the confines of Idumea, and made the whole Country tributary to Israel.

In his high Court of Judicature, David sat Judge; it was his great delight to receive the petitions of his subjects, to hear causes himself, and administer impartial justice with the strictest equity.

Joab was confirmed in his honourable post of Captain-General, Commander in Chief over all the Armies of Israel. Jehosophat was elected his Recorder. Zadoc and Abiathar High-Priests. Seraiah was his Secretary of State. Benaiah Captain of his Life-guards. Besides these he maintained a troop of Body-guards, and
another

another Regiment, to be always about his person, and called his Watch.

David's Sons were in places of Authority and Dignity, and Chief Rulers over Magistrates and Officers.

There were now in the Army, thirty Valiant Warriors, who had distinguished themselves by their bravery, all of them General Officers, signalized by their heroic valour, and good conduct in hazardous exploits and posts of signal danger, and his enemies were weakened, humbled, and almost all of them tributary. David renewed his friendly alliance with Hiram King of Tyre, and that Prince supplied him with immense quantities of Cedar, and a number of expert workmen to assist him in his improvements, and add grandeur, beauty, and magnificence to the City, his royal Palaces and publick buildings.

David, more at peace and in great prosperity, was at leisure to enlarge his domestic comforts, and attend to his household and family.

As under the dispensation in which he lived, the number of his wives and concubines were unlimited, David formed many new connections, and married several more, and he had a large
and

and numerous progeny born to him in Jerusalem, besides all those, who had been born to him in Hebron, and they added to the grandeur of his Court, and the happiness and prosperity of his Kingdom.

When he felt himself thus peaceably established, and settled in Jerusalem, David was naturally led to reflect on past life, and the many mercies and deliverances of his God, and now the friendship of his beloved Jonathan afresh occurs to him, is there (says he) any left of the house of Saul, that for Jonathan's sake I may shew him kindness, and David recollected Ziba a servant of Saul's, and he enquired of him after Saul's family; Ziba told him, there is yet a Son of Jonathan's, and the King says, where is he? and David sent for Mephibosheth, shewed him much kindness, settled the family estate upon him, and appointed Ziba his steward.

A series of successes, and the blessings of peace, inspired this pious Prince with sentiments of religious gratitude, and devout acknowledgments. David zealously strove to make Jerusalem, the City of God, the centre of his Worship, and he devoutly laid a plan, for bringing the Ark of God into it. The Ark had already continued almost fifty years at Kirjath-jearim. David was desirous

desirous of placing it in the best and most elegant apartment of his new Palace, and there to have the stated, and daily solemnities of Divine Worship publickly performed. The Ark was the emblem of the Divine presence, God is said to have dwelt between the Cherubims, it was now at the house of Abinadab on the hill, and had been in a very singular manner brought thither. After a bloody battle, in which the Philistines were Conquerors, the Ark of God was carried off by the Enemy, and placed in the Temple of their Gods, but on account of the many plagues and judgments they had incurred by it, the Philistines, by the advice of their Priests, had fixed it on a carriage, harnessed a yoke of Oxen to it, and permitting them to take their own course, the Ark was by them brought back into the territories of Israel, and they stopped at the house of Abinadab.

The Splendour, Dignity and Safety of Jerusalem, were objects of high value and importance to David, and now the very first wish of his heart was, to secure to it, the more immediate Presence, and Protection of the God of Israel.

The Ark was a Chest of Shittim Wood, one yard and half in length, over-laid within and without, with pure Gold, the top formed a Seat,
and

and it was called, the Mercy-Seat. Two tables of Stone were placed within, and the ten Commandments engraven on them. These were called the Testimony, the Unalterable Laws of God.

In the Hebrew Republick, the Ark was looked up to, with sacred awe and veneration, a standing Memorial for Jehovah, the centre of Religious Worship, where they immediately applied for his favour and directions.

Jerusalem to possess, this visible emblem of the Divine Majesty, the display of his glory and his presence, exhibited in a cloud or mist over the Mercy seat, and so awfully conspicuous there, was most earnestly longed for by David, and he assembled together all his People, thirty thousand men, all his Princes and Nobles, his Generals, Captains of thousands, and Captains of hundreds, and of these he formed a grand Council, revealed to them his pious wishes and intention, and demands their advice and assistance.

The proposal was unanimously agreed to, upon which, David by Proclamation, brought together the Priests, the Levites, and the People, and he led them himself to Kirjath-jearim, and having prepared a new carriage drawn by Oxen, Uzzah and Ahio, the two Sons of Abinadab, drove it to

their Father's house, and then placing the Ark upon it, they both attended it, Ahio marched immediately before, and Uzzah on the one side of it. The greatest demonstrations of joy were every where seen, as soon as it began to move, a long procession and numerous band of Sacred Music kept playing before it, psalteries and timbrels, cornets, and cymbals, accompanied with the voices of the Levites.

This national satisfaction and general joy, of King and People, was suddenly interrupted, as they passed the threshing floor of Nachon, one of the Oxen stumbled and shook the Ark, Uzzah fearing lest it should fall off the carriage, rashly put his hand out to support it; Uzzah was only a Levite, and by the Jewish Law forbidden to touch it, and the penalty was death, the Ark was the dwelling place of Jehovah, under his protection and guardian care, Uzzah had violated the Law, the hand of God struck Uzzah, he fell down dead by the Ark.

This most distressful event perplexed and greatly grieved the King, " David was fore-
 " afraid of the Lord that day, and (he says)
 " how shall the Ark of the Lord come to me ?"
 David immediately desisted from his undertaking, he ordered it into a house near, and it belonged
 to

to Obed-Edom, a Levite, and there it continued three months, and during all that time, Obed-Edom was distinguishingly rewarded, by a very unusual and remarkable prosperity.

This visible blessing over Obed-Edom, and all his family, was soon noticed by David, and it encouraged him to remove the Ark to Jerusalem.

David again assembled all his People, and his grand Council of Princes, Nobles, Generals, Captains of thousands, and Captains of hundreds, to assist him on this very solemn business, made still more awful by the judgment inflicted and fatal end of Uzzah, he sent for Zadoc and Abiathar the High-Priests, and six Principal Levites, and he ordered them carefully to abstain from all pollution, and purify themselves in order to bring the Ark upon their shoulders (and they should be accompanied, and assisted by all Israel) to the apartment, he had allotted and prepared for it. David revealed to them what he suspected to be the cause of the former interruption and distress, the error they had committed in attempting to convey it in a carriage, when the way of removing it on former occasions, had been so expressly directed them by God.

In obedience to the King's Command, the Priests and the Levites abstained from all pollution, and sanctified themselves, they were all cloathed in robes of white linen, eighteen were appointed as porters with staves to support the Ark, the rest sung the Anthem, and such sacred Hymns, as David had himself composed on this occasion, and their voices were accompanied with a variety of instruments, a band almost without number. Two Priests were placed on each side, as door-keepers, seven more walked in procession before the Ark, sounding loud their Trumpets, and the whole People with their Princes and Nobles, Elders, Heads, and Rulers, Generals, Captains of thousands, and Captains of Hundreds, all with musical instruments, and a numerous choir of Virgins (all in white) accompanied the music with their voices, exultingly expressing, by frequent and loud acclamations, their joy and extacy, during the high solemnity of this very devout and glorious procession.

David himself laid aside all his Robes and Ensigns of Royalty, and he put on a linen dress, in the form of a Levites, and he girt round him a linen Ephod, with his Harp in his hand, on which he played himself, and expressed the highest demonstration

demonstration of joy, in sight of the Ark, the Emblem of the Presence of God, according to the custom of the times, and their usual manner on their grand solemnities: in order to render the march and procession more sacred and religious, the King at proper intervals put up devout prayers to God, a most solemn Worship, and the Priests performed the Ceremonies of Sacrifice, and offered up peace-offerings and burnt-offerings.

Alternately, and in chorus, they chanted that sublime Ode, the seventy eighth psalm—

David rejoiced he had now, his King and his God, more immediately present with him, and he persuasively exhorted all his People, to acknowledge this Almighty God, the God and King of Israel, to be assured he is present every where, both in his Heavenly, and this his earthly Sanctuary, the Author of his prosperity, the Author of his People's happiness.

During the whole procession, the nation were putting up fervent prayers to Almighty God, who had so honoured the Ark with the tokens of his presence, and had now made Jerusalem his perpetual habitation, became Guardian Protector of the City; interested in its safety, prosperity and peace; and God never did desert Jerusalem,

or

or give it up to be ravaged or plundered, from the time of this solemn procession, and entrance of the Ark, until the destruction of it, by Nebuchadnezer King of Babylon, but under many Persecutions and distresses, by signal interpositions and deliverances, God always did preserve it, and very distinguishingly, under all the Reigns of its pious, worthy, and good Princes.

After the Ark was set down, by the Priests and Levites, under the Tent David had pitched for it; at the Altar, erected before the Tabernacle David himself presided, while the Burnt-Offerings, and Peace-Offerings were offered up to the Lord. Then the pious King, turned himself towards his People, and most solemnly pronounced a blessing on them, in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, exhorting them, to keep their hearts perfect in the sight of God, to walk in his Statutes, and to keep his Commandments, as at this day.

Behold a Patriot King, the Father of his People, supplicating Almighty God in behalf of all his subjects, exhorting them to Piety, and the Religious forms God had established among them, to secure His protection and their own prosperity,

David

David with royal munificence ordered to every man, and every woman, a loaf of bread, a suitable proportion of meat, and a flagon of wine, and then joyfully sent them, every one to his own house.

After David had thus deposited the Ark at Jerusalem, he appointed the Levites to their respective offices, distributed them into distinct classes, with royal munificence he provided for the celebration of publick worship before the Ark, with the customary pomp and splendour of those times, and the genius and circumstances of the People, and David composed an Ode of praise and thanksgiving, principally recorded in the hundred and fifth psalm.

David now expressed his most earnest wishes to build a Temple to the Lord, and he told his designs to Nathan the Prophet, who approved of his intentions and assured him, God would certainly be well pleased with such piety and zeal for his service, but it was on the ensuing night, God ordered the Prophet to carry him a very signal prohibition, and yet with all, the kindest assurances that his Son should build him a house, and that his Kingdom should be established for ever. Full of the warmest gratitude, David in
the

the presence of Nathan, burst out into the most humble expressions of praise and acknowledgment, and these extemporaneous dictates of piety, and devotion, are recorded in the eighteenth and following verses, of the hundredth and twenty second Psalm.

About this time, Nahash King of Ammon died, and was succeeded by Nahun his Son. Upon this occasion David sent Ambassadors to congratulate the young Prince on his accession, and as his Father was his friend and ally, he proposed the same amicable league and alliance with the Son, and he assured him of his resolution, on his part, inviolably to preserve it. The Princes and Nobles of the Court of Ammon, misunderstood the nature of the embassy, the friendship and kindness intended by David, and they made the King believe the Ambassadors were sent as spies to report of the country, and inspect into its resources and strength. Thus deceived the young Prince listened to the remonstrances of his Nobles, and treated the Ambassadors with contempt and indignity, he gave immediate orders to have one half of their beards shaven off, one half of their cloaths cut away, thus ignominiously disgraced he sent them back to David, and with no other message or answer whatever.

When

When David beheld his Ambassadors on their return, so shamefully disfigured, he zealously set about retrieving their honour, and resenting the affront. David instantly blew the trumpets, and proclaimed War against the Ammonites. The Court of Ammon, well knew, the insult would be noticed; it was in fact, a commencement of Hostilities, they formed new Alliances, and made all necessary preparations, the Treasury was opened, a thousand Talents were sent to Mesopotamia, informing them, they would receive into present pay, as many Troops, as they could send them. A thousand Talents more they forwarded to Zobah, and to two other powerful Princes in their neighbourhood, with whom they formed a league of amity, and asked their immediate assistance. Such very numerous and formidable Alliances, did not intimidate David. They had waged War. His cause was just. His trust in the Lord his God. David sounded his trumpets, assembled his whole Army, appointed Joab his General to head them, and to march instantly against Rabbah, the Capital of the Ammonites. The rough and hardy soldier, as soon as he was invested with the Command, entered the Country, marched his Army towards the City, and encamped within sight of Rabbah. The Ammonites opened their gates, and poured out in battle

array, to the right and to the left, and formed themselves into two divisions. The Auxiliaries filled all the plain. The Ammonites placed themselves in full front of Joab, but not very distant from their own gates.

Of such a division, Joab, an experienced General, wisely availed himself, he chose out a select number of his brave and valiant Troops, and stationed them in full front of the Auxiliaries. He ordered his brother, to draw up the remainder in line of battle, and boldly compel the Ammonites to engage with him. Joab further agreed with his brother, that in case the Auxiliaries should prove too powerful for him, and his men, he should withdraw his Troops from the Army of the Ammonites, and bring them instantly to his assistance, and Joab in return, would send spies, and watch his division and progress, and fly to his succour, in case he, and his troops should be overpowered by the Ammonites. With undaunted courage, obstinacy and resolution, Joab engaged the Auxiliaries, the Syrians all fled, so fierce and tremendous was the attack, Joab was soon victorious and master of the Plain. The Ammonites refused to engage at all, they retreated within their gates, and shut themselves closely up within their walls.

After

After this total defeat of the Auxiliaries, and the blockade of the Ammonites, Joab marched his Army back to Jerusalem.

The Ammonites sorely exasperated, notwithstanding their ill success, fought out new Allies, they made formidable preparations for War, raised new recruits, augmented their Army, and fortified their City, and never offered any overtures of peace whatever. David again assembled his forces, and he took the command on himself, marched his Army to the Plains of Jordan, and soon after, he passed the River: there the Ammonites gave him battle, a most bloody conflict, but a signal and glorious victory was obtained by David, forty thousand Infantry, and seven thousand Cavalry, were all put to the sword, and their Commander in Chief.

Mesopotamia here sent Ambassadors, and very rich presents to David, and they became tributary.

Just before the winter, David returned to Jerusalem, laden with his rich presents and his spoils, and early in the spring, he sent Joab his General against the Ammonites. Joab marched his brave Troops, a powerful Army into their Country, laid waste all their lands, and shut them up again

(300)

in Rabbah their Capital, he erected his ramparts and dug his trenches, made all the necessary preparations for a vigorous siege, and he sat down with his whole Army before it.



ESSAY

E S S A Y X.

CONTINUATION OF THE

L I F E A N D R E I G N

O F

D A V I D.

His Amour with Bathsheba—Uriah's Conduct—
David's letter to Joab—Uriah's Death—Mar-
riage of Bathsheba—The Prophet Nathan's
Visit—His Wife, Elegant, and Striking Lec-
ture—David's Sentence on himself—His Pe-
nitential Sorrow—Birth and Death of a Son—
Solomon born—Nathan appointed his Tutor—
The Royal City of Rabbah taken—Magnificent
Crown—Amnon's baseness—Tamar's distress—
Absalom's Murder of Amnon—David's Sor-
row and Astonishment—Absalom's flight to
Geshur, his Grand-father—His Return, and
Reconciliation—His Insinuations and Rebel-
lion—David's Flight—His mournful Procession
His meeting with Hushai, Ziba, and Shimei—
Absalom proclaimed—Achitophel's Perfidy—
His Death—Wife advice of Hushai—Ab-
salom's battle, Death—David's Grief and La-
mentations—Joab's Remonstrance.

HITHERTO

CONTINUATION OF THE
LIFE AND REIGN
OF
DAVID.

HITHERTO, you have seen a most amiable and highly virtuous character; a brave Commander, a good Soldier, of active piety and zeal for God, an example to his People, a Father at home, and their successful Champion in the field.

Would to God, I could drop a tear of oblivion, over one moment of his life, and blot it out from the Annals of History for ever.

His

His amour with the wife of Uriah, and the orders he gave to destroy the husband, are two crimes highly distressful and enormous, but he was so grieved for them both, and with so much sensibility expresses his heart-piercing anguish, and the bitterness of repentance, that the passage in his life, you so much grieve for, and over which you would so gladly cast the veil, is highly instructive and edifying, a lesson of vigilance, a model of self-abasement. Assuredly the pleasures of the most prosperous sinner, could never counterbalance a hundredth part of those sensations, he pathetically and so exquisitely describes.

Under the dispensation, David lived, he was allowed to have as many wives, and concubines, as he pleased, and he hoped at first, he was not violating the religion, and laws of his Country. But, he was informed, she was Bath-sheba, a married woman, the Daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah, a brave distinguished Officer, now in his service, and at the siege of Rabbah, the royal City of the Ammonites, under Joab his Commander in Chief.

The equity of the Mosaic law, allowed of no atonement for adultery and murder. So pure, death was the punishment always.

Hurried

Hurried and blinded by passion even to madness, David at the expence of conscience, honour, duty, sends for Bath-sheba. She came, she yielded, and she too sacrificed chastity, honour, faith, and incurred guilt, and its legal punishment, death.

Bath-sheba went home, we hear no more of her, until she sends a faithful servant to David, secretly to apprise him of her pregnancy, it was an occurrence, which threw them both into the greatest perplexity, how to avoid the scandal, infamy, and punishment. David by the consciousness of guilt, brought himself into the most unmanly, mean, and deceitful shifts; he sends for Uriah home from the siege, under the pretence of making inquiries respecting Rabbah, he entertains him at his table, and then ordered him home to his own house; but Uriah slept in the Barrack with the soldiers on guard, the next day, the King invites him again, and he plies him freely with the bottle, and he contrives to make him drunk. Drunk or sober, the rough and hardy soldier would never go home, Uriah slept again with the Palace-Guard. His conduct strangely agitated and disappointed David, every art whereby he hoped to conceal his guilt, failed him; one only way remained; he resolved to
 cloke

cloke one sin, by committing a much worse; he lays his plans, fixes on a method, and as vice is ingenious, he treacherously executed it, a most deliberate murder, but he contrived to commit the deed to another. Uriah's stay had been in vain prolonged, his dispatches are now given him, and with them, the following letter to Joab, his General, sealed with the royal signet.

“ Set Uriah in the fore-front of the hottest battle, retire from him, that he may be smitten and die.”

Joab appointed him a post of great danger on the City Walls, Uriah was killed by a sally from the Garrison, bravely fighting for his murderer.

An express was dispatched with the news, Uriah's name in the list of slain, David wrote a formal answer back to the Camp, the sword of war knew no distinction, and he ordered Joab, to maintain his courage, persevere in his attack, and the City would be speedily reduced.

Bath-sheba put on her weeds, and soon after the usual days of mourning were over, David sends and conducts her to the Palace, and publicly married her. Hereby he screens her from a prosecution for adultery, secures her from the

penalty of death, and makes her the amends in his power, for the injury he had done her.

David does not appear to have felt as yet, any checks of conscience for his crimes, the review of his conduct does not seem to have struck him with remorse, insensible and callous, he enjoys the pleasures he had purchased, even at so horrible an expence, the siege went on prosperously, and his multiplicity of business, and Government affairs engross his thoughts and his time. However inattentive and easy David might be, the History informs us, the Lord was angry with David, and He awakened his conscience, shewed him the heinousness of his crimes, brought him to a sense of his guilt, to penitential sorrow, and devout acknowledgment. It was on this occasion, God was pleased to employ his Prophet Nathan, he requested an audience of the King, and by a fable and story most artfully wrought up, he forced David solemnly to pronounce condemnation on himself. The story the Prophet told, was grave, forcible, affecting, insinuating, and polite. It conveyed a most important message, tenderly and delicately expressed. Bathsheba had just borne him a Son, and David was highly elated, in the midst of his joy, when Nathan is introduced, he addresses the King with the following complaint.

Two

“ Two men lived in the same Town, one poor,
 “ and the other rich, he had herds and flocks in
 “ abundance, but the poor man had not any
 “ thing, save only one little ewe lamb, which he had
 “ bought and nourished, so that it grew up toge-
 “ ther with him and with his children, it did eat
 “ of his morsel, and drank of his cup, and lay in
 “ his bosom, and was to him as a Daughter, and
 “ there came to the rich man, a certain traveller,
 “ and he begrudged to take of his own herd, and
 “ of his own flock, to entertain his guest, but
 “ took away the poor man’s lamb, and provided
 “ for the traveller.” As the Lord lives, says
 “ David, “ The man who has done this, is worthy
 “ of death, he shall restore the lamb four-fold, in
 “ as much as he hath done this thing, and hath had
 “ no compassion.” And Nathan said unto David,
 “ Thou art the man.” Uriah the Hittite, thou
 hast smote with the sword, and hast taken his wife,
 to be thy wife, and hast slain him by the hands of
 the children of Ammon.

The Prophet now pronounces a heavy judg-
 ment upon David and his family.

The dreadful sentence roused the conscience
 of the King, and from full conviction, he cries
 out aloud, “ I have sinned against the Lord.”

Nathan

Nathan instantly replied: "The Lord hath put away thy sin. Thou shalt not die, but the Son born unto thee, he shall surely die."

Upon this, the Prophet withdrew, and left the Palace. David greatly humbled himself, he fasted, he lay all night upon the ground, he acknowledges the greatness of his offences, and he most devoutly prays to be forgiven, to be restored to the favour of God, and that his little infant might be spared. This last request was very speedily denied him, and the child died on the seventh day, his servants seeing his distress, still prostrate on the ground, were afraid to tell him; he might be more miserable and inconsolable; but seeing a bustle, the King enquired, and as soon as knew it, he arose from the earth, washed and anointed himself, put off his mourning dress, went to the Tabernacle where the Ark was deposited, he there devoutly worshipped God, and then returned home, ordered his table to be spread, and refreshed himself.

The servants expressing their surprize, David told them, that since the child was dead, his fasting could be of no avail, he must follow the child, it could never return to him.

Bathsheba

Bathsheba bore him another Son, and God was pleased to bless him from his earliest infancy, he called his name Solomon, and Nathan the Prophet, was appointed his tutor. The siege of Rabbah went on prosperously, the Ammonites were reduced to very great extremities, by cutting off the supplies of water and provisions, a famine ensued in the City.

Joab, at this time, forwarded his dispatches to Jerusalem, and informed the King of the distress of the Ammonites, and the nearness of their surrender, and requested the honour of his Majesty's coming in person to the camp, that the glory of the conquest might be ascribed to him. David commended the duty and fidelity of his General, assembled his guards, and hastened with them to the siege, the City was soon taken, the foldiers had leave given them to plunder it, and David himself took possession of the King's crown, valued at a talent of gold, and there was set in the middle of it, a Sardonyx stone of great beauty and lustre.

Ever after, enthroned in state, David always wore this crown. He put all the inhabitants of Rabbah to the sword, with the like severity, he treated their other Cities, and he carried all the rich spoils, he had taken, back with him in triumph to Jerusalem.

The

The loss of David's little Son, was the beginning only of family troubles, another affliction soon followed; his Son Amnon's base, treacherous, infamous lewdness, and violence with his own half sister, is now the cause of very fatal mischief, and great distress.

After Amnon, had cunningly contrived her ruin, and perpetrated all his baseness, the Prince appears highly disgusted, most cruelly insults her, and turns her out of doors into the street: Tamar covered with shame, rends her Princely robe, in sackcloth, and with ashes on her head, she goes directly to the house of her brother Absalom, who very kindly received her, and comforted her, by the tenderest and most affectionate treatment, using every soothing means to alleviate her sorrow, and she in this disconsolate situation, staid in his house two whole years, without ever seeing, or being seen, by any body whatever.

David was very angry, and most exceedingly distressed, he too plainly saw the threatenings of God, by the Prophet Nathan, were actually taking place, Amnon was his eldest Son, a favourite with his Father, and in his anger and high resentment, he was very unwilling to pass sentence, and take away the life of his Son, but Absalom (who was own brother both by father and mother)

was

was over-come by his violent disgust, and hatred to Amnon, and was watching every opportunity, how he might secretly revenge the injury. Two years were now elapsed, and Absalom proposed taking a journey into the country, and shear his sheep, at that time it was always usual to make a feast, and he invited all his family, to his estate at Baal-hazor, to partake of it. David excused himself, unwilling to put his Son to a large expence on his account, but all his children were invited, and he freely gave them leave; and also Amnon was permitted to accompany them.

It was at this feast, Absalom gave orders to his servants, to keep their eye upon his brother Amnon, and when they should see him elated and merry with wine, they were to rush upon him and slay him, Absalom's servants obeyed their master, and his brothers, seeing so tragical an action, were very terribly alarmed, and every moment expected a like violence might be intended for each of them, they therefore ran to their horses, mounted them as fast as possible, and rode full speed back to Jerusalem.

On the very first alarm of this assassination, a messenger had posted to David, and he reported that all his sons were killed, overwhelmed with the deepest horror and anxiety, the King rent his garments,

ments, lay prostrate on the earth, venting and breathing out his grief in the bitterest sighs and lamentations, while in this posture and sore distress, the noise and bustle of horses were heard, his Sons arrived, the Father rises, runs out to meet them in a flood of tears, David wept, the Sons too wept bitterly, they for their brother, and David for his Son.

Abfalom fled to Talmaj, to the King of Geshur, and he continued at the Court of his Grand-father three years; at this time David's fond and affectionate disposition began to relent, he regreted his absence, and his banishment, he commissioned Joab, his General, to bring back his Son, and sent him for that purpose to Geshur; Abfalom returned with Joab, but before he could enter the City, David ordered him to his own house, and he confined him there two years. Abfalom then grew very impatient under his confinement, he held a conference with Joab, and urged him with great earnestness to intercede with his Father, for his reconciliation and liberty. The General, for some reasons, put him off from time to time, and neglected making any application on his behalf. Abfalom was a most beautiful person, the handsomest man in all the Kingdom, and he now thought himself Heir to the crown, and during so long an absence and confinement,

was

was fearful lest some device might be forming against his succession. He therefore repeatedly with great zeal, renewed his request to Joab, and at length vexed and sadly disappointed at his indifference, the Prince grew quite warm, and he ordered his servants to set fire to a field of ripe corn, belonging to the General, and burn it all up. Joab instantly ran to Absalom's house, and enquired the cause of this mischief and devastation, Absalom sternly reproved his omission and long delay, and reasons with him on his sufferings and confinement. He was even happier out of the Kingdom and at Geshur; to be near his Father, and never see his Father, nor be forgiven, grew every day, more and more insufferable. Joab was now in earnest to apply in his behalf, he requested an audience, he won upon the affections of David, and obtained leave to bring him to the Palace. Absalom fell prostrate before his Father, with dutiful submission and reverence he prayed to be forgiven, David instantly held out his hand, raised him up himself, and most cordially embraced him, and restored him to his affection and favour.

Absalom now took upon him great state and magnificence; he was Heir apparent to the Crown, David's eldest Son, and he built him a state equi-

page, encreased the number of his horses, and enlarged his stables, was attended with a body-guard of fifty men, and they marched in state before him, whenever he appeared in publick.

Very early in the morning, it was always the custom at the Palace to present petitions, for the People to attend and make their complaints, and lay their grievances before the Judges, Absalom rose early, went to the Palace, placed himself near the gate at the entrance, familiarly conversed with all who resorted thither, he enquired their business, lamented their waiting, insinuated himself into their good graces, threw out some suspicion, some distant hints to lessen their good opinion of the skill, the judgment, and even the integrity of the Judges, the King's Council, and the Magistrates. Day after day, he thus most assiduously ingratiates himself, winds himself into their favour, becomes more and more popular, a friend of the People, a redresser of their grievances, assumes the politest and most winning carriage, a highly pleasing person, the most elegant and accomplished figure at Court. Absalom lamented with great concern, he was not admitted to sit as Judge, to hear all their complaints, and decide himself in their favour, thus tacitly reproaching

proaching his Father, the Judges, and the Government.

When he was addressed as a Prince, and homage was paid him, most courteously he takes them by the hand, embraces them, in token of affection he kisses them, insinuates himself into their esteem, and thus aims at weakening their loyalty, and undermining the good Government of his Father.

Numbers were now in the interest of the Prince, such conduct made him many friends, he is highly spoken of, and is secretly attempting to secure the Crown, by the most unnatural and impious rebellion against his Father, endangering his life, and plundering his Crown. All his schemes are deeply laid, and Achitophel, David's first Counsellor, a man of deep cunning, and consummate policy, offered him his services, and wonderfully encouraged him. It was under the mask of piety, Abfalom first concealed his treason. When he was in Syria, and had taken refuge at Geshur, the Court of his Grand-father, he offered up a solemn vow, if it should please God to bring him back to Jerusalem, and reconcile him to his Father's love, he would offer upon the Altar at Hebron, a most devout thanksgiving and sacrifice; the Prince requested an audience of the King, and duti-

fully asked his permission to go thither, and perform his vow, it was the place of his Nativity, and the Altar, and the high place for sacrifice were yet standing, and in daily use. David not in the least suspecting any treasonable intentions or disloyalty, commended the piety of his Son, and very readily assented to his proposal, gave him his blessing, and wished him prosperity.

When these religious sacrifices were performed, there was usually a grand festival, and Absalom invited two hundred of the principal inhabitants, the most respectable of the People, to meet him at Hebron, to grace the solemnities, and partake of the entertainment; after this he dispatched his emissaries, into all the principal towns on the road, and a select number of those he could trust, were ordered to stay, in a still and private manner in every one of them; on a signal which should be given, his little party should sound the trumpets, assemble the People, and publicly proclaim him, King of Israel. They were then directed to collect and enlist into their party, all the Forces they possibly could, and repair with them all to his standard at Hebron. His plans thus adjusted, Absalom set out on his journey, many of his guests accompany him, and the rest very innocently prepare for their meeting him
they

they all respectfully there paid him their homage and compliments, as Heir to the Crown, and eldest Son of the King. These guests were People of character and great respectability, they were therefore of advantage to his cause, and inspired with high spirits and courage, all his party and the conspirators, who at least thought them all friends to the Prince and his cause.

When Absalom arrived at Hebron, he sent a formal message to Achitophel, President of the King's Council, and this great Counsellor immediately joined his party, and stamped a sanction and importance on all their proceedings, a credit noticed by all the company.

Transactions thus publicly performed, soon became a general talk, the news was carried immediately to Jerusalem, the report was all over the City, Absalom had gained the hearts of the People, they had proclaimed him King, he was already on his march for the Capital,

David had very few forces in Jerusalem, he had not soldiers enough to defend the City, the King hastily summoned a council, and proposed to them, leaving instantly his Palace, and retiring to a distance from his Capital, as the only means of safety left him, in order to avoid his, and his family's

family's falling, into the hands of the Rebels, who already on the march, were approaching the City, and expected suddenly to enter it, they (in the hour of distraction) might put the inhabitants to the sword, ravage and plunder all his People.

The King's Council were intimidated, they professed the highest respect, love, and loyalty to his Majesty, and a determined resolution to follow him every where.

David collected all his household, his wives, and his children, and his servants, they all on foot instantly set out, his Nobles, his Friends, and a great number of Citizens accompany him, all his body-guards. and what forces he could so suddenly raise followed him, he left in his Palace only ten women, his concubines, and they were left in charge of every thing. His six hundred faithful soldiers who had travelled with him from Gath, marched in the front, they all kept moving forwards, until they had gained a safe distance, where they might prudently stop, to receive his dispatches, and hear of every thing, now about to happen at Jerusalem.

After this refreshment and first halt, the King ordered them on, over the Brook Kedron, his children, and little ones moved first, and then followed

followed the soldiers, his Nobles, his Friends, their Attendants and his Wives, last of all David himself passed over, and they all took their rout towards the Wilderness, amidst the most affectionate lamentations of his People, for their brave and most excellent Prince, thus piteously and ignominiously drove into exile, by his ungrateful, and most unnatural Son. Zadoc and Abiathar, the two High-Priests, and their Priests, and the Levites here overtook him, and they had carefully brought with them the Ark, the emblem of the Divine presence, but David directed them to return back with it.

“ God is every where present, should God reject me I submit, let Him do to me as seemeth Him good.”

Affliction with dignity and manly fortitude; a humiliation sweetened by hope and trust in his God. Abiathar one of the High-Priests, in order to forward the safety and escape of many more of his friends, was already gone back, and had passed over the Brook, when on looking behind, he saw at a distance Zadoc, the Priests, and the Levites bringing the Ark, and repassing Kedron. David had held a conversation with the High-Priest, prudentially and politicly told him, you are a Seer, a wise and intelligent man, do go quietly back

back to Jerusalem, and I pray God to protect and bless you, let your two Sons accompany you, they will be trusty friends, you now perfectly well know my rout, send me word of all that passes in the City. Both the High-Priests continued at Jerusalem, until the rebellion was entirely suppressed. The King having thus confidentially settled his mode of intelligence, pursued his march towards the Wilderness, and ascended the hill to Mount Olivet; and it was here he suffered sorely from his great fatigue, a sense of his danger, the fearful apprehension of the displeasure of God, and from the unnatural unaffectionate conduct of a Son, he most tenderly loved. David's very heart was pierced, and his tears found vent and overwhelmed his eyes. He travelled on a mourning penitent, his head covered, and bare-footed, his attendants, in proof of their love and very tender concern, followed his example, and they very heartily, and grievously sorrowed with him. A messenger here overtook them, and came running with the news, that his first counsel, and wise friend Achitophel, had joined the conspirators; David well knowing his abilities, his cunning and deep policy, was greatly alarmed and distressed.

On the perfidy and treason of this unnatural friend and counsellor, David (some time after reflecting

reflecting on his baseness) composed the fifty fifth Psalm. On the top of the Mount, the King was met by a very old and affectionate friend, Hushai, and he had rent all his clothes, and put earth upon his head in token of sorrow, and he would fain have accompanied David in his flight, but the King wisely reflected, how very useful the service of so faithful a friend, would be to him and his cause in Jerusalem, and he informed him of the treason and perfidy of Achitrophel, overpersuading him to return back and offer his services to Absalom, he might have it in his power to defeat and frustrate Achitrophel's deep policy, and treacherous devices against him. Hushai yielded to the importunity of David, he immediately returned, and found Absalom had already taken possession both of the City and the Palace.

Going down the hill on the other side, David was overtaken by Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, and he brought him on asses two hundred loaves, a great quantity of raisins and summer fruit, and a cask of wine, a seasonable present, as they were just now entering the Wilderness, to refresh all the travellers. David enquired of Ziba where his master was, and he answered at Jerusalem, he was waiting in full expectation of being restored to the Throne. It was a very little

farther at Bahurim, that the King was met by Shimei, a relation of Saul's, and he followed after David with the most horrid curses and imprecations, throwing great stones down the hill and molesting him and his party; such infamous and malicious insult, enraged the King's Officers, and Abishai, one of his Generals, asked permission to go and take his head off, David very mildly reasoned with him, " Behold my own Son seeketh
 " my life, how much more this Benjamite." Such meekness and forbearance, made Shimei more intolerant, and he kept at a very short distance, pelting him with stones, and clouding him with dust. David still pursued his march, and he entered the Town of Bahurim, in the tribe of Ephraim, and he halted, and here refreshed his family and all his People, wearied out with so very long and hasty a journey.

Abfalom and his rebel Army were all settled, carousing and rejoicing in Jerusalem, Achitrophel his first favourite and prime Minister. Among other Officers of State, Hushai came to Court, and paid his compliments to the young Prince, " God
 " save the King." Abfalom with unparalleled rudeness was very severely satirical upon him, and scornfully asked, is this your kindness to your old friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?
 and

and Hushai answered, No, whomsoever the Lord, the Army, and Israel chuse, him will I serve. As I have served thy Father, so will I serve Thee. The Frankness, and well-known fidelity of Hushai, instantly procured him a Station and appointment at Court.

Abfalom now summoned a grand Council of all his Friends and Adherents, in order to adopt proper measures, to accomplish and secure the Revolution in his favour, which had been so very successfully begun. A very horrid and most dreadful part of the Prophets Prediction was now ripe for fulfilment; Nathan had told David, " I will take thy Wives, and I will " give them to thy Neighbour" to this abandoned and most execrable of all Measures, Abfalom was now, advised by his Minister and favourite Counsellor Achitrophel, and he seemed to have in view, the base and most determined resolution, of preventing hereby, all future reconciliation between Father and Son.

On the House top, in the face of the Sun and in sight of all Israel, Abfalom, without fear or shame, perpetrated even this Wickedness, this most horrid of all incests; and had he the least decency or tenderness of conscience, he would have shuddered at the thoughts of committing

mitting, even in the darkest and most secret retirement imaginable, what he had thus publickly and avowedly executed at noon Day.

The next advice of Achitrophel, was not less horrid and impious, his plan and contrivance was, to murder his Father, and he offered himself to become his executioner. He would set out that very night with twelve thousand chosen Men, and accomplish this most bloody Deed, and the scheme he proposed, was very likely indeed to have proved fatal to David. Hushai's prudence and wise conduct prevented it. Absalom highly delighted with Achitrophel's advice, and his zeal to serve him, actually signed his orders to set off, but he first sent for Hushai. (Hushai, had already found means to forward the necessary information to David, directing him to change his route and make no delay whatever, fearing least he might not be able to put a stop to the expedition, and instant march of Achitrophel.) Hushai's opinion was wisely calculated to soothe the vanity and ambition of the young Prince, and it luckily met the approbation of the whole Council, though perhaps almost the only one, which could have saved the life of David, give him time to refresh his harrassed followers, and recover them from the sore alarm and consternation. "The Counsel of Achitrophel
is

is not good on the present occasion, Thy Father and his Men, are Men of Valour and experience, they are not likely to be surprized, probably they had fortified themselves in strong holds, Caverns, and among Rocks. His advice to his Majesty was, to call together all Israel, from Dan to Beer-sheba, and pour in upon David and his Army so numerous a body of troops, as would put it out of the power of any of them to escape,

Providence permitted the young Prince, and all his Council, to be blinded by this very extraordinary Speech. Achitrophel was the only Person who perceived the drift and dangerous consequence of it ; most horribly chagrined and mortified that the advice of Hushai should be preferred before his, he ordered his Afs to be saddled, and rode home full speed, he there sat himself down, made his own Will, settled all his affairs, and afterwards went out and hung himself.

Upon the information forwarded by Hushai, David lost not one moment, he with all his family, his attendants and army, at mid-night, crossed over the River Jordan, and early the next morning arrived at Mehanaim, in the tribe of Gad, and here many of his friends resorted to

to him, and they brought him plenty of Provision, supplied him with Tents, Couches, Utensils and all necessaries.

Abfalom was soon informed of his Father's new route, and of his forces and strength, he marched himself against him, with a formidable Army, and Amasa was his Commander in Chief, they pitched their tents, and formed a large encampment in the land of Gilead.

David assembled his troops and divided them into three bodies, he gave the command of them to Joab, and his two Brothers. David proposed to be himself their General, but this, all his friends most strenuously opposed, alledging, that his enemy would much prefer his single death, to the destruction of his whole Army. David therefore with a small reinforcement stayed at Mehanaim, and he anxiously gave, in person, strict charge to all his Officers, and in hearing of all his men, that they should be very careful and tender, respecting the life of his Son. In the Forest of Ephraim a very fierce and bloody battle was fought, the Rebel Army were totally routed, twenty thousand men were slain in the fight, numbers more in the wood flying and attempting their escape. Abfalom pursued by a party of royalists fled with full speed upon his mule through
the

the wood, his fine bushy hair entangled in the branches of an oak, and the Mule ran from under him, and left the young Prince hanging by his hair, which was very thick, and immoderately luxuriant. A foldier hastily ran and told Joab, upon which he said to him, why did you not smite him, I would have given thee fifty shekels of silver, and a girdle (a Captain's Commission;) the man answered him, hadst thou offered me two thousand, I would not, after that my Lord, the King had so strictly charged, and entreated me to spare the young man. Joab said, it was now no time to parly, where is the Prince? and he commanded him to shew him the spot, Joab instantly struck a javelin into his heart, ten of his guards now cut down the body, threw it into an adjacent pit, and covered it over with a heap of stones, Joab sounded a retreat, recalled his soldiers from the pursuit, and put an end to the effusion of blood. The rebel Army thus dispersed, every man fled to his own home.

At the gate of Mehanaim, David in great anxiety, most impatiently waited the event of the battle, and he was distressfully solicitous for the safety of his Son, the watchman on the high Tower, cries out a messenger! a messenger! and David says, he bringeth good news, again the watchmen cries out, I spy another! and David again

again replies, he bringeth good tidings; the watchman now says, it is Ahimaaz Son of Zadoc and the King was glad, a messenger says he, of joyful news; Ahimaaz now arrives and pays him homage, the battle is won, and David says, but my Son. Ahimaaz answers, he could only tell him of the victory, the Enemy was routed. The other messenger now enters, David tells him I have heard of the victory, where is my Son? Cushai answers, may the same fate be to thy enemies, as has now befallen thy Son; David went up to an upper chamber, the highest, most retired place in all the City, most bitterly bewailing the loss of his Son, beating his breast, tearing his hair, renting his clothes, and crying aloud, O' my Son Absalom, my Son, my Son Absalom, would to God, I had died for thee ! O' Absalom my Son, my Son.

Joab, and the Army, would not enter the City at the great Gate and in triumph as Conquerors, with countenances dejected, and eyes full of tears, they silently marched in, so sorrowful, and more like captives were they all. David sat mute, with a veil over his face, heavily sobbing and unseasonably mourning over his Son, Joab foresaw from such a conduct, the most fatal consequences, it was very likely indeed to occasion a mutiny. So rough and hardy a Soldier, unaccustomed to the tender feelings of humanity and parental fondness,

went

went rudely up to him, and in terms imperious, insolent and threatening, upbraided the King with ingratitude, reasoned with him (at a season like this) on the ill consequences of such a publick effusion of sorrow and affection, forced him out of his retirement, obliged him to come forwards, and led him to his People, “ if you persist, I will give
 “ your Kingdom to another, I will caule your
 “ Army to revolt. Dry up your tears, shew your-
 “ self at the Gate, assume all the cheerfulness in
 “ your power”.

On this threatening speech of his General, the King resumed his wonted care for his People, he came forwards, sat down at the gate in all his royal robes, and they all saluted him, and came respectfully to pay him homage. All his Officers, Soldiers and People, even those who had sided with Absalom, crouded in, and were now most ambitious to shew him affection, duty, and respect.



E S S A Y X I.
CONCLUSION OF THE
L I F E A N D R E I G N
O F
D A V I D.

C O N T A I N I N G

His return to Jerusalem—Message to Amasa the Rebel General—Meeting with Shimei, Ziba, and good old Barzillai—Murder of Amasa by Joab—Revolt under Sheba—Quelled by Joab—Account of a Famine—Put a stop to by what—Motherly affection of Rizpah—New Wars with the Philistines—David's numbering the People—His Choice out of three Punishments—Prefers the Pestilence—David's prayer puts a stop to it—Purchase of Araunah's Threshing floor—Adonijah's Rebellion—Solomon proclaimed—David's gift towards the Temple—Munificence of the People—David's Advice to Solomon—Recommendation of the Sons of Barzillai—His conversation respecting Joab and Shimei—David's Death—His Sepulchre—Character.

C O N C L U S I O N

CONCLUSION OF THE
LIFE AND REIGN
OF
DAVID.

WHEN David saw the readiness of the Tribes and his People, to conduct him back to his Capital, he forwarded an express to Zadoc and Abiathar, his High-Priests, to assemble the Chiefs and Elders of Judah, and hasten with them, to accompany him home to his Palace, and he sent a trusty Officer with an offer to Amasa, the rebel General, that in case he would take the Oaths of Allegiance, loyally and amicably

bly join his Troops, he would appoint him his Commander in Chief, and General over all his Forces, and as he was a Relation, David persuasively added " Say ye to Amafa, art thou not of my bone, and of my flesh ? " This Step was an Act of great Prudence, for Amafa had garrisoned Jerusalem, with a large body of Troops, and was already fled back thither with a strong and powerful re-inforcement.

Hitherto, all the Tribes had ambitiously strove to shew their Loyalty, and obliterate the remembrance of their defection, by the most respectful homage, and the most dutiful expressions of Submission. Before the King arrived at the banks of Jordan, Shimei, who had so insultingly persecuted him in his flight, here met him at the head of a thousand Benjamites, Shimei fell prostrate on the Ground, paying him the most submissive homage, praying his life, and suing for pardon and forgiveness. Abisgai, a General Officer, who had been so provoked by his former insult, baseness, and infamy, reminds David of Shimei's shameful blasphemy and persecution, and asks if he should not die, but David unwilling to eclipse the general joy, by inflicting any punishment, generously pardoned Shimei, " Verily thou shalt not die, and David confirmed it with an Oath." A very little farther, Ziba, attended by his fifteen Sons, and a train of twenty servants

vants met the King, and they all on the road fell down and paid him homage; Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, had by a false representation, artfully lessened David's good opinion of his master, and by that cunning and slander, he had obtained a grant of his estates, Ziba now comes eagerly to congratulate the King on his return and restoration. Good old Barzillai, at the age of four-score, came also to express his great joy, respectfully accompanied him over Jordan, and he there dutifully and most affectionately took his last farewell. David invited him to Jerusalem, but the good old man, incapable himself of enjoying, the pleasures of a Court, requested his Majesty would bestow such honours on his Son, upon which, Chimham being introduced, was most graciously noticed by the King, and invited to the Palace. David embraced Barzillai, he kissed his old friend, and they parted in tears.

The King's message to Zadoc and Abiathar, his High-Priests, to assemble the Elders of Judah, and come in a body to meet him, excited some jealousy between the men of Judah, and the men of Israel, the obstinacy of the former exasperated the other Tribes, and they thought themselves slighted by the distinction paid to Judah; this occasioned a tumult and a revolt, one Sheba, Abfalom's Captain, a factious Benjamite, cried out aloud, " We have no part in David ! no inheritance

"heritance in the Son of Jesse!—To your tents
 "O' Israel!"—Judah persisted in its loyalty,
 and they conducted David safe to Jerusalem.
 As soon as he arrived, he commanded Amasa, his
 new General, to muster up his Army, and give
 him an account of their numbers in three days.
 Amasa was not quite so soon prepared, and David
 dispatched Abishai, with all the troops he had, to
 quell this new insurrection, Abishai immedi-
 ately set out accompanied by his Brother Joab,
 and with such Forces, as he also could collect,
 when they were come as far as the stone of
 Gibeon, a general place of rendezvous, Amasa
 and his men overtook them, and Amasa there
 formally took upon him, the Command of the
 whole Army. Joab, all on fire, stifles his rising
 choler, and going up (as was usual) to salute
 Amasa, with congratulations and friendship, he
 took him by the beard, as if he was going to kiss
 him, but Joab instantly ran him through the body
 with his sword, and his bowels gushed out at the
 wound. Joab left him thus wallowing in his
 blood, and proceeded on his way with Abishai in
 search of Sheba, placing a servant by the body,
 commanding him to tell his soldiers, as they came
 up, that all of them who were friends to David,
 should instantly repair to the standard of Joab.

The

The guard set over the body, seeing the soldiery, shocked at so ghastly and horrid a spectacle, removed the General's corpse into a field, and covered it over, after which the whole Army peaceably followed Joab.

Sheba and his little Army had shut themselves up in the Town of Abel, situated in the Tribe of Manasseh, Joab surrounded it with his troops, regularly laid siege to it, and began battering down the Suburbs. A wise and prudent woman, an inhabitress of Abel, sent a message requesting to speak with the General, and she advanced forwards and took her stand upon the Town Wall, Joab met her, and a parley here commenced. The inhabitants of Abel had been always distinguishedly loyal, they had committed no offence, were peaceable and dutiful subjects; Joab replied, I mean no harm to you, or your City, to the Town itself, I intend no hostility. The Magistrates had harboured a Rebel, one Sheba, Son of Bichri, and him he would have, the woman cried out, hear the words of thy handmaid; see now, the head of Sheba, shall be thrown to thee over the wall. She assembled the Elders and Magistrates, reported her conference with the General, and they immediately ordered Sheba's head to be thrown over the City Wall to Joab. He blew the trumpets, sounded a retreat, sent every

every man to his tent to collect his baggage, and Joab marched his Army back to Jerusalem.

While this rebellion was quelling, David remained at home, and amongst his daily visitors and courtiers, Mephibosheth came to the Palace, and most joyfully congratulated his Majesty on his return. Ziba's perfidious answer to David, when he inquired of him after his master, had greatly lessened him in the good opinion of the King, and he appeared very distant and shy when he met him. The Prince was sadly distressed, he convinced him of his innocence, assured him of his grateful, and most inviolable attachment, exculpated his character, and David was at last satisfied and pleased; but the King restored him only one half of his estates notwithstanding, and admitted Ziba, to retain the remainder, though he had so perfidiously acquired it. At parting, Mephibosheth took a very polite and affectionate leave of David, " Since I am so happy, as to see my Lord the King return in peace again to his house, let Ziba take all my estates."

Joab's success, at once quashed and put an end to a very dangerous revolt, and restored a general tranquillity throughout all the Kingdom. Joab was again constituted Commander in Chief over all the Forces of Israel. Benaiah, Captain of

of his Guard. Adoram Treasurer. Jehosaphat, Recorder. Zadoc and Abiathar High-Priests, Sheva Secretary of State, and Izra the Iarite succeeded Achitrophel as President of the Council. David now settled his household, and he ordered the ten women, his concubines, incestuously violated by Absalom, a table and suitable apartments, where they were kept in close confinement, honourably maintained as in a state of widowhood.

David had born to him seventeen Sons, and he had an Army of three hundred thousand Warriors, who did duty monthly by rotation, during a time of Peace, but in time of War they were all in Arms.

Two years after his return to Jerufalem, a Famine began, and it lasted three years. The want of the usual rains, the violence of the heat and drought, were at first supposed to be very natural causes of the distress, but its very long continuance was so extraordinary, that David thought it necessary to enquire of the Lord respecting it, and by every means in his power, lessen and avert the calamity; indeed it was now generally believed to be a visitation from God, and a token of his displeasure. The King's very proper and dutiful inquiry, was immediately and most ex-

preſſly answered. Saul and his bloody houſe, had impiouſly ſlain the Gibeonites. David inſtantly ſent to know, what ſatisfaction it was, they required, for the wrong that had been done them. The Gibeonites ſent back for answer, neither gold, ſilver, nor valuables, but ſeven Males of the family of Saul, whom (they informed his Maſteſty) they would immediately put to death.

David delivered up to them two Sons of Saul by Rizpah his Concubine, and the five Sons of Michal, the Daughter of Saul, which ſhe bore to Ariel, the Son of Barzillai the Meholathite. Soon after their arrival in the Country, they were all ſeven, publickly executed in Gibeah of Saul, to make their puniſhment more notorious and ſhameful. The rains and uſual ſhowers now returned and the famine entirely ceaſed.

Poor Rizpah accompanied her two unfortunate Sons to Gibeah, ſhe witneſſed herſelf their execution, and near the gibbet on which they were hung, ſhe erected a tent, and would never leave the place, but kept watching their bodies, to prevent their being torn or defaced by the birds or the beaſts. David on being told of her tender affection and moſt melancholy ſituation, ſent and ordered their bones to be brought away and buried in the Sepulchre of Kiſh, their Grand-
father,

father, in the Tribe of Benjamin, and he had now also the ashes of Saul and Jonathan, removed to the same Sepulchre.

Soon after this, David fought four successive battles against the Philistines, it was in one of these, David had very near lost his life by a Philistine Giant, he was in the very moment of running him through the body, when Abishai first sheathed his sword in the body of the Philistine. After this most merciful and providential escape, David did not appear in the field. The People dutifully swore unto David and made a league with him, not to go out in person any more. "Thou art our Guide and our Glory, see that thou quench not the light of Israel." And indeed; after these four engagements, the two Nations remained at Peace during the remainder of the Reign of David.

To perpetuate the memory of this very signal escape and deliverance, David composed that beautiful Ode, the eighteenth Psalm.

He had not long enjoyed his new and peaceful settlement at home, before he issued out his orders for numbering the People; Joab in vain remonstrated, and wicked as he was, represented how very displeasing it would be to God. Are they not all my Lord's servants? why will he be

the cause of trespass to Israel? David would be obeyed. Joab, and the Commissioners, set about this work most unwillingly, in hopes the King would see his error they delayed it all they could, nine months and twenty days they were employed about it, and then brought in their list, in which Benjamin and the Levites, were yet unnumbered.

Of fighting men of Israel, eight hundred thousand, and of Judah, five hundred thousand.

Before Joab and his Commissioners had made their return, David experienced some very evident tokens of the displeasure of God, he was struck with a lively sense of his folly, and one night he expressed to his friends, the deepest remorse and sorrow for his conduct, and it was the very next morning after, that the Prophet Gad was sent to him, and he named three different Judgments, God (he said) had given David his choice. A seven years famine throughout the land—to be pursued by his enemies three months—or to suffer a three days pestilence.

David severely humbled, owned it a hard choice. he preferred the latter as the more equal punishment, under the more immediate execution of Almighty God. Seventy thousand Israelites were destroyed, and it had just began to shew itself in Jerusalem, when David's most earnest prayer
and

and fervent supplications were heard—he looked up and beheld the Destroying Angel, the Minister of Vengeance, standing at the thrashing floor of Araunah a Prince of the Jebusites, and David here addressed him in behalf of his innocent People, and tenderly and reverentially pleads with God to spare them, “ Even I, it is I that have “ sinned, but as for these sheep, what have they “ done ? ” A very pathetic and moving expostulation, and he saw the Angel before him, with a drawn sword commissioned to execute the judgment, and inflict even in Jerusalem, the punishment the King had made choice of. David, now earnestly intreated that the anger of God might only fall on himself, and on such of his Nobles as had been his advisers. In this moment of sorrow and despair, while he was thus so tenderly and devoutly pleading, the Prophet Gad is again sent to him, and he commanded him to erect an Altar on that very spot, where he had now so visibly beheld the Destroying Angel. David hastened to the thrashing floor, Araunah came out most respectfully to meet him, and when David proposed buying it, he made him a generous offer of the floor, the thrashing Oxen, and all the utensils belonging to it. David was very sensible of his kindness, but told Araunah, it would ill become the King of Israel, to offer sacrifices that were not his own, and Araunah sold him the floor, for fifty sheke

shekels of silver, and David instantly goes about raising an Altar there, and he offered up burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings upon it, and fire came down from Heaven and consumed the victims, affording a happy proof, God was again reconciled to Israel.

This thrashing floor stood on the Hill, where the most magnificent Temple of Solomon was afterwards built, encouraged by all these gracious tokens, of God's acceptance and approbation, David continued ever after to offer Sacrifice on this Altar.

“ This is the house of the Lord God, the Altar “ for the burnt-offering for Israel.” Hereby consecrating this place for the Temple, and its sacred service, the centre for the Publick Worship of all the Tribes of Israel. For this very purpose David bought the whole ground, and he gave for it six hundred shekels of Gold (ie) about five hundred and fifty pound.

David now seventy years of age, was visibly declining very fast, he lost all his native heat and vigour, and no warmth of dress, nor any physical art whatever could restore it him. Adonijah his eldest Son, looked upon himself as already invested with royalty. He built him a most splendid

did equipage, was attended by a numerous body-guard, and with running footmen in great state. David, affectionately fond of his children, viewed all indulgencies with pleasure. Elated by the grandeur he had assumed, fearful and jealous of not ascending the throne, Adonijah concerted with Joab, Commander in Chief, and Abiathar one of the High-Priests, and they assisted him in forming a most treasonable conspiracy, he gained over to his party, all his Brothers but Solomon, and he bribed and seduced all his Father's servants, in great haste the young Prince caused himself to be proclaimed, and invited all his party, many of the Officers of the Household and the Elders and Magistrates to a sumptuous feast, he had prepared at Zobelet, in order to be publicly acknowledged, and all his friends and followers cried out, God save the King ! God save King Adonijah !

Nathan the Prophet, Zadoc the High-Priest, and many Nobles and friends in the interest of Solomon, suspecting strongly his design, Nathan went to the Palace, and advised Bathsheba to go instantly, and inform the King, of this new conspiracy and usurpation, and remind him of his promise in favour of her Son, while she was yet speaking, Nathan hastily enters the King's Apartment

ment, and tells him of Adonijah's feast, and of their proceedings at Zoheleth.

David assumed all his dignity, he recovers all his vigour and resolution. He summonses his Nobles, all his Court, his Officers, and the Elders of Israel, and instantly proclaimed his Son Solomon King. Zadoc the High-Priest set him upon David's own mule, and led him to Gihon, a Fountain near Jerusalem on the opposite side to that where Adonijah was gone, Solomon was anointed, and all Jerusalem rent with the joyful acclamations, Long live King Solomon ! God bless the King !

David's commands were executed with such speed, that Adonijah, and his party had not the least suspicion of it, until they were all alarmed by the general joy, and universal shouts throughout the City.

Jonathan, the Son of Abiathar the High-Priest, ran and gave them an account of the whole Ceremony, and that every thing had been expressly done by his Majesty's orders, the King himself (he said) was in the highest spirits and joy imaginable. Such unexpected news struck them all with amazement, and they all stole away, dispersed themselves, and fled with the utmost speed. Adonijah took sanctuary at the horns of the Altar.

Solomon

Solomon there sent him word, if he behaved himself loyally, wisely, and like an honest man, he would not hurt a hair of his head, but disloyalty, now, would be instantly punished with death. Adonijah came, he prostrated himself before the new King, and Solomon commanded him to retire to his own house.

David finding his end drawing nigh, he assembled the Elders and Heads of all the Tribes, his Nobles, Generals and Officers, all his Priests and the Levites, and made them a long speech, acquainting them with his wishes, and designs to have built a magnificent repository for the Ark of God, but the Prophet had told him, that work was reserved for the more peaceful Reign of his Son Solomon. It was (David said) what he had much at heart, he had made great preparations for it, and laid up from time to time, immense treasures, no less than three thousand talents* of gold, and seven thousand talents of pure silver, with proportionable quantities of copper, iron, and various materials, all of which, together with all the stately plans and models for the Temple, he now resigned up to his Son, to be by him perfected and improved, as he, in his wisdom should direct.

* Three hundred seventy five pounds, a Jewish Talent.

David earnestly requested the assistance of all his People, in so arduous an undertaking, and whoever of them were inclined to join him, and contribute towards so very expensive an Edifice, might now bring in all their free will offerings, and deposite them in the publick treasury.

Such royal munificence, at such a moment, and on so pious and solemn an occasion, inspired a spirit of benevolence, and genuine liberality throughout the whole assembly, his Nobles and his People, every one was ambitious to imitate a generosity so royal and glorious. They were all delighted with the thoughts of the building, a repository for the Ark, a Temple for the God of Israel, and they most freely brought in their contributions. A subscription was instantly opened, and it amounted on the spot, to five thousand talents and ten thousand drams of gold; ten thousand talents of silver; eighteen thousand of brass; and a hundred thousand of iron; many subscribed and brought in their valuables and jewels, and these were all paid in, to the royal treasury.

The sight of so much wealth and so very freely offered, revived the heart and soul of David; he broke out into extacy and a holy rapture, full of gratitude and piety to God, of love and pure affection to his Son and all his People, this was followed

followed by devout and most solemn sacrifices, and the highest acclamations of religious joy. The very next morning the King ordered one thousand oxen, two thousand sheep and lambs, to be added to the daily oblations, and offered up in sacrifice, with a vast profusion of meat-offerings and drink-offerings, and he feasted the whole company all that day with a royal munificence, worthy so great a Monarch and so good a Man.

An assembly of joy and gladness, a feast and a thanksgiving. The Government was at this meeting, so wisely established, and so nobly planned, it produced forty years uninterrupted prosperity and peace.

Solomon was now anointed a second time by Zadoc, and he here received the homage of his Brethren, and of the Chiefs, Nobles, and Elders of Judah, and of all Israel. By sound of trumpet they proclaimed him King, throughout all the Tribes, and Zadoc alone was constituted his High-Priest.

It was on this occasion, David composed the seventy second Psalm. A grand Coronation Anthem.

The good old King now sent for his Son Solomon, to impart to him his last instructions, and

pronounce his blessing. With dignity, and true piety, he devoutly presses upon his mind, the full assurance, that the gracious promises God had made to him, were all conditional, they would only accompany a faithful and religious observance of his laws.

“ And thou Solomon my Son, know thou the
 “ God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a perfect
 “ heart, and with a willing mind, for the Lord
 “ searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the
 “ imaginations of the thoughts, if thou seek him,
 “ he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him,
 “ he will cast thee off for ever. Take heed now,
 “ for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house
 “ for the sanctuary, be strong, and do it.”

David now affectionately recommended to him the family of his old friend Barzillai, “ His Sons
 “ are with you, let them eat at thy table.

The last charge he gave his Son, related to two State Prisoners, he positively condemned and ordered the execution of a murderer, who had too much influence and power for him to punish, and Solomon wisely executed his commission immediately on Joab, in a manner worthy a just, resolute, and a great Prince. Most reasonably Joab expected no less punishment than death, he looked for assassination, he fled to the horns of the Altar, the place of refuge for the murderer,
 Benaiah

Benaiah, Captain of the guards, was sent to him and Solomon commanded him to slay him, on the spot. Shimei was the other, the insulting Benjamite who had so rudely persecuted him in his flight, when under the deepest affliction, and David tells his Son, Shimei deserves to die for his horrid curses, imprecations and cruelty, but Shimei acknowledged his crime submissively, and I sealed his pardon with an oath. My Son, you are under no obligation. Shimei was commanded to keep within the City gates, and was told, he would commit an act of high treason, whenever he was seen beyond them.

Some years after, Shimei pursuing two servants who had run away, was found riding in the Country, immediately on his return, Shimei was put to death.

Soon after this, his last conversation, with Solomon, full of days and honours, David died, aged seventy, he was the oldest King, that ever sat on the Israelitish Throne, he had reigned seven years in Hebron over Judah, and three-and-thirty years, over all the twelve Tribes of Israel.

David was buried in a stately Sepulchre, very magnificent and curious, cut out of a solid marble rock, containing many spacious apartments, one within another, and the further one was divided into niches, cut into the solid stone, each nitch designed

designed for one coffin, the peaceful and silent residence for the Kings of Israel.

The Zeal, Piety, and Penitence of David, are highly celebrated and exemplary. His character as a Prophet, lives for ever—and he stands distinguishingly exalted above all the Patriarchs, by the promise of the Messiah, affixed to his posterity.

His Modesty, Prudence, Magnanimity, and Valour, gained him love, esteem, veneration, honour.

A Brave and Fortunate Commander in the field, of strict integrity, moderation; and candour. He lost no Battle. He besieged no City, he did not Conquer.

In his Court of Judicature, David sat Judge, passing sentence with wisdom, Equity, and Mercy.

Over-indulgent to his Children, injuriously partial even to their vanity, and their follies.

A very tender, faithful, and most affectionate friend.

He had acquired the politest accomplishments, a master of music, the richest sublimest vein of Poetry, his praises and thanksgivings are a flame of Devotion, his penitential hymns, heart-piercing,
and

and most exquisitely painful; forgiven of God, he never felt reconciled to himself; a sage philosophic inquirer, graceful and highly pleasing in his Person, amiable, generous, and wise.



ESSAY XII.

ON THE

LIFE AND REIGN

KING SOLOMON.

BY the express orders and declaration of David, the free choice of the People, their Elders Rulers and Heads, at the appointment and approbation of God, Solomon an amiable young Prince at the age of eighteen, ascended the Throne of Israel.

It was customary at the commencement of a new Reign, for People of all ranks and orders to come crowding to the Palace, with shouts and the loudest acclamations, expressing their joy, and paying their homage. Long live the King ! May the King live for ever ! The blessings and adulations and hearty welcome of his People.

Under many fearful apprehensions, as well as under the feelings of disappointment, Adonijah had paid his dutiful and respectful homage, and he had at that time obtained a conditional assurance of safety. No one should hurt a hair of his head while he continued loyal, after which interview, he had been directed to go home to his own house.

The day following Adonijah sent a Message to the Palace, and humbly requested an Audience of the Queen Mother. Bathsheba received his visit most respectfully, and with a winning courtesy Adonijah paid her homage. The Queen pleased with his graceful submission, inquired if he had any thing to disclose, she possibly might have it in her power to serve him, and assuredly she would. So polite and very kind a reception pleasingly gratified and encouraged the Prince, with sweet simplicity, and openness he told her, as he was the Eldest Son, and had the voice of the People, or

at least he could have gained it, no doubt he had looked upon himself as Heir to the Crown of Israel, but as it was now otherways ordered, and the Government disposed of, to his Brother, he told her Majesty, he would bring his mind to be satisfied with the present settlement. There was one thing which would much contribute to his domestic happiness, and he prayed the Queen to use her interest with her Son, and procure him leave to marry Abishag, a highly celebrated beauty, who by the advice of the King's Physicians had been introduced to David, and it is supposed was married to him, some short time before his death.

Bathsheba, pleased her Son's Rival would be so easily satisfied, made not the least hesitation at promising him her influence and interest. She was very sure (she said) her Son would be glad of an opportunity of obliging his Brother, and she knew he would the more readily assent, as she would, most earnestly join, in his request and petition.

Adonijah respectfully withdrew, much pleased with his visit, and in full expectation of marrying this very beautiful Shunammite.

Bathsheba went immediately to the King's apartment, she was graciously received with all the duty

duty and respect, due to a Mother and a Queen. Solomon affectionately embraced her, led her to his bed-chamber, where there was a Royal Throne, on which he seated himself, and on his right hand he ordered a chair for his Mother, immediately on being seated, my Son (says she) grant me one petition, I trust my Son, you will not refuse me this my first request. Solomon interrupted her, a Mother should be always, and most dutifully obeyed, and he desires she would command him, upon which the Queen names the purport of her visit, and requested him to give Abishag in Wife to Adonijah. The King's countenance took fire. Why does not my Brother ask of me the Kingdom? he would strengthen his interest by making Joab his Commander in Chief, and Abiathar his High-Priest. With such ambition, and so very early shewn, Solomon was exceeding angry, and as soon as he had dismissed his Mother, he issued out immediate orders for the execution of Adonijah, and the King sent Benaiah, the Captain of his Guard, to perform it.

Solomon, enthroned, ordered into Court Abiathar the High-Priest, and he thus addressed him. On account of your troubles under David my Father, and the zeal and earnestness you shewed, in bringing hither the Ark, I now grant you a reprieve from death, your entering into the
interests

interests of my Brother and treasonable conspiracy with him, oblige me to command you to leave my Court. Retire therefore to a private station, and confine yourself to your own estate at Anathoth.

Joab, the General, hearing of Adonijah's execution was greatly terrified and alarmed, he instantly fled to the horns of the Altar for a sanctuary, the only hopes of safety. Solomon commanded Benaiah to drag him from thence, and bring him into Court. Joab told him, he would die where he was, upon which the King ordered his General to take off his head, but that his body should have an honourable burial at his own house in the Wilderness.

Benaiah for his faithful Services, was now appointed Commander in Chief over all the Forces of Israel, and Zadoc was confirmed in the High-Priest-hood.

Solomon called next for Shimei, and he directed him to build a house in Jerufalem, and never more to pass the Brook Cedron, and the King enforced his performance of the contract by a solemn Oath. It was three years after, two of his domestics were missing, and escaped to Geshur, and Shimei rode hastily to seek them, but on his return to the City, Solomon sent him word, he had now forfeited his life, and what was
much

much worse, he had violated his Oath to God, and his perjury would now meet with its deserved punishment; Solomon sent Benaiah his General, and commanded him to put Shimei to death. Having thus removed and punished his enemies and State Prisoners, in order to encrease his dignity and strengthen himself still more, he sought an alliance with Egypt, the most powerful of all the Empires around him, and he married Shulammite the Daughter of Pharaoh. Pharaoh presented her with the City of Gezer, as a dowry; Gezer formerly belonged to the Canaanites, and had been burnt to the ground, Solomon rebuilt it, new peopled the City, and it became a very valuable acquisition.

Solomon's next object was, inspecting the Walls of his Metropolis, a great part he rebuilt and fortified, although, during his whole reign, he lived in the profoundest peace. Solomon began by administering himself the most impartial judgment, promoted throughout his Kingdom a strict observance of the laws, paying always a pious and rigid regard to the good Counsel, and wise Commands of his Father. The young Prince busily employed himself, early and late, in affairs of Government, with unwearied zeal, prudence, and discretion.

At

At this time, Solomon set out on a journey to Gibeon, and on the high brazen Altar, he offered up a thousand sacrifices and burnt-offerings.

His distinguished piety, and this his wife beginning, procured him the blessing of Almighty God, and it was the night ensuing, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, at the dead of night, and commanded him to ask, whatever he most ardently wished for. Conscious of his tender years, the anxious and important weight of Government, his ignorance and inability, how wisely to hold the reign, and guide it for his People's advantage, Solomon says, " Give me " O' Lord, sound judgment, a right understanding, to judge this People with equity and " truth."

So ingenuous and wise a request, obtained for him, a wisdom and knowledge, which no mortal had ever possessed, and it was accompanied with a promise of earthly blessings, he had most modestly and judiciously declined to ask for, viz. riches, honours, peace and happiness. Solomon leaped out of bed, he fell prostrate on the ground, and devoutly worshipped God.

The

The day following, most seriously impressed he set out on his return to Jerusalem, Solomon there recognized this very extraordinary and signal event, this great goodness of God, and religiously offered up a magnificent royal Sacrifice, and made a Princely feast for all his People.

In his High Court of Judicature, enthroned in state, two women were brought before him, the one held a young infant alive, the other brought a dead child. Both women strenuously contended for the living one, and they both, as positively disclaimed the dead. It was now thought impossible to adjudge the living infant to the right Mother. Solomon wisely concluded nature would best unravel the difficulty; the King ordered into Court, one of his Body-Guard, and commanded him to divide both the living child, and the dead one, and then give each of the Mother's one half of each child. The Soldier's appearance and the drawn sword, so terrified and alarmed the real Mother, she clung hold of the man, roaring out aloud, not to hurt her child, she would give up her child to her adversary, pierced to the soul at the thoughts of butchering it; the other woman was satisfied, she silently applauded the sentence, and admired the wisdom of the Judge.

The

The King directed the living child to her, who had given such an artless and feeling testimony of her being its Parent.

A difficulty so wisely solved, procured the Judge the high opinion of all the Court, and of every one who heard the decision.

The wisdom of Solomon, became no less conspicuous in the prudent choice he made of all his Officers; in the exact order and magnificence of his Court; in the oeconomy of his Household, and the provisions for his Family.

The bill of fare for each day, was

• Thirty Measures of fine flour.

Double the quantity of common flour.

Ten fatted Oxen.

Twenty Pasture Oxen.

One hundred Sheep, besides Harts, and Roe-bucks and fallow Deer, poultry, fish, fruit, and vegetables in abundance.

Out of each Canton or Tribe, a Steward was appointed, and they supplied the household in rotation, every steward from his own district, and each of the twelve, continued their respective offices one month.

• A Measure was eight bushels and a half.

His

His royal magnificence appeared in the number of tables he kept, his costly furniture, the splendour of his equipages, and his stables, in which he had twelve thousand stalls. Solomon was the first who introduced chariots drawn by horses in Jerusalem; his number of carriages was fourteen hundred. He sent for them out of Egypt, and he supplied all the neighbouring Princes round about him, for every chariot and four horses he obliged them to pay him six hundred shekels,* and one hundred and fifty was the price for every single horse. Bales and large quantities of Linen, and other commodities were brought him from Egypt, the Annual Revenue from all which was immense.

Solomon shewed great wisdom in adjusting his customs and finances, in regulating his Army and appointing his Guards, although in the profoundest Peace, he maintained twelve thousand Horsemen quartered and dispersed them among the Tribes, out of which he elected by rotation his Body-Guards, his Watch, and his Guards of State.

His Subjects were very numerous, they were men of valour, and many of them opulent.

* A Shekel, two Shillings and Six-pence.

Wealth so immense gave him a powerful sway, by far the richest, most exalted, grandest and most powerful Monarch of the East. By his Friends and Allies respected and beloved, they were all pouring in upon him the most magnificent presents. By his Enemies he was feared. All the Crowned Heads around him, were paying him in, their yearly Tributes.

His Dominions extended from the River Euphrates, even to the Nile, and the Kings of all those Countries between them, were tributary.

His fame, wisdom, and magnificence, made his Metropolis the resort of numbers, and a large concourse of strangers was an encrease of its wealth. Gold and silver lost their intrinsic value by their over-abundance.

Solomon was well acquainted with the advantages of Commerce, he carried on a traffick with the Spice Merchants in Arabia, and the South, and another valuable merchandize with the inhabitants of the North, and he traded largely to Egypt, for linens, yarns, horses and carriages; besides Custom-house duties, and tolls, these brought into his Treasury immense sums.

Nations

Nations and Kings around him, often paid in their annual Tributes in the commodities of their various Countries. Moab sent in yearly, one hundred thousand lambs, and as many rams, with their wool.

It was customary for every one to approach the Throne with a gift, Subjects in general were expected to bring in presents to his Majesty, and to a King so much beloved, they liberally imparted of the best of all their stores, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold without number.

The Revenue his Navy brought in, exclusive of his Customs, amounted annually to six hundred talents of gold, considerably above three million, besides precious stones, spices, ivory, ebony, and the rich commodities of India.

All the Tribes of Israel, each under his vine, and under his fig tree, sweetly enjoyed the blessings of Peace, of Plenty and Freedom. Excepting the poor Canaanites, and a few Prisoners and Captives, all Israel was free. Among the Sovereign Princes, that sought the friendship of Solomon, Hiram King of Tyre, was the first, who had sent Ambassadors to congratulate him on his Accession, and offer him his services, and by

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them

them on their return back, Solomon sent him this letter.

Solomon to King Hiram.

“ Know that David, my Father, was desirous to
“ build a Temple to God, but engaged in con-
“ tinual Wars, he was prevented; for he never
“ ceased from Conquest, until he made all his
“ Enemies, his Tributaries. I give God thanks
“ for the Peace I enjoy, and having much leisure,
“ I purpose to erect a house to God, according
“ as God foretold my Father that I should build
“ it; my request to you is, that you will send
“ some of your People, with my servants to
“ Mount Lebanon, to hew wood; for the Sido-
“ nians understand that business better than my
“ subjects; and as to wages, whatever you shall
“ think reasonable, I will pay to the workmen.”

Hiram perused the contents, was well pleased with the request, and returned back this answer.

King Hiram to King Solomon.

“ Thanks to God, he has given your Father’s
“ Crown to you, a wife and virtuous Prince; I
“ am extremely pleased with it, and will supply
“ you with every thing you desire in your letter.
“ I will order the tallest and fairest Cedar, and
“ Cypress trees to be cut down, and carried
“ by

“ by my servants to the Sea side; whom I will
 “ further command, to prepare a vessel, and sail
 “ with them to whatever part of your Kingdom
 “ you please; from whence your men may trans-
 “ port them to Jerusalem. In exchange for these
 “ things, let us have a supply of corn; which we
 “ who inhabit an Island, stand in need off.”

Duplicates of these epistles, were preserved in the Jewish and Tyrian records.

Solomon commended the frankness and kindness of King Hiram. He sent yearly twenty thousand measures of corn, and twenty butts or vessels of oil: and Solomon added as many casks of wine. Such good beginnings produced a lasting and inviolable friendship, and the two Kings swore always to maintain it. Hiram sent the Cedar, Cypress and the Firs on floats to Joppa, Solomon's Servants and Officers received them there, and they were brought from thence to Jerusalem. The friendly Alliance now commenced between these two Princes, ended only with their lives.

In order to relieve his own People and make their trouble and burthen less, the poor Canaanites were now assembled, and all the foreign slaves throughout the Kingdom, and they amounted

amounted to one hundred and fifty three thousand six hundred. Solomon commanded that seventy thousand of them should be employed as labourers, to fetch and carry, to heave and work, and eighty thousand of them should be sent to hew timber, and cut stone and marble out of the rock. He appointed a suitable number of Officers, Overseers, and Masters to superintend and direct every days duty, and every ones employment. From amongst his own subjects Solomon selected next, thirty thousand men, and under Adoniram, whom he constituted a Principal or head Governor, he sent, ten thousand at a time, to Lebanon to work and assist the men of Tyre in hewing wood, marble and other articles there, and they were afterwards wrought by the Tyrian carvers, masons, and artificers, and when polished, cut out, and prepared, were put on board the floats and conveyed by water to Joppa, but much of them were finished on the plains of Jordan. Solomon exchanged the ten thousand men he sent to Lebanon every month.

The vast number of hands employed as labourers, the activity and great diligence of the workmen, and the vigilance of no less than three thousand six hundred Overseers, so wonderfully brought forward the work, that in the fourth year of his reign, Solomon was enabled to lay the foundation

foundation of this most immense and superb structure, which amazing Work was begun the twenty first day of April, in the year of the World, 2990, and 1014 years before the birth of our Saviour.

The foundation of this immense pile described in the sixth and seventh Chapters of the second book of the Kings, was laid on Mount Moriah, and it took up the whole group of the Mountain, great indeed was the labour of levelling it, rough prominent eminences of solid rock, and proportionate hollows were filled up, to form a large capacious area, a firm solid level basis for this most magnificent Superstructure.

Mount Moriah takes its name from two Hebrew roots, conveying the idea of vision, and God, united they express, here God was seen.

David had appointed and consecrated this spot for the structure of the Temple, and it had been wholly enclosed in the City Walls, and long frequented as the sacred place of the Altar, where the Prophet Gad had met David and appointed the peace-offerings and sacrifices to be offered up; and it was the awful spot over which the Destroying Angel, with a drawn sword, hung as it were between Heaven and Earth, halting
and

and waiting his orders to execute the further vengeance of the Almighty, or put a stop to the raging pestilence. Here he had been seen by David, and at his very fervent prayer and expostulation, God was mercifully pleased to prevent its progress, when it had only very slightly visited Jerusalem.

With such prodigious speed and alacrity was this most magnificent Structure carried on, that in little more than seven years it was finished. Every article of stone, marble, wood, brass, iron, plates of gold and jewels were cut, polished, carved, fitted, beat out, set, and all but joined and adjusted to their proper places, before ever they were brought to Mount Moriah.

The Pile of building was immense, of polished marble, in solid pieces, beautifully white, of sixty feet in length and upwards, it fronted the East, with a Tower, one hundred and twenty cubits high. The inside was all wainscoted with Cedar, from top to bottom, and cornished and inlaid with gold.

After four extensive flights of regular steps, each flight terminating in a large, spacious, magnificent area, you enter by a stately Portico the Temple, its marble floor, was inlaid with plates
of

of gold, its cornish and highly finished roof was covered over with gold, when the sun shone the strong glare, and blaze of light was most splendid and dazzling ; passing forwards in this spacious and superb space, supported by a number of elegant and ornamented pillars, the Temple seemed then divided into two parts, at the further end of the Inner Temple, was the solemn and most sacred Holy of Holies, with a superb Cedar door curiously wrought, inlaid and sumptuously embellished, and from a high and lofty arch immediately before it, hung a rich and very beautiful veil, of the softest and most delicate silk, with an embroidery of flowers, in scarlet, purple and hyacinth. Within side the veil and this superb door, were placed two large figures of Angels, they were covered with gold, and had wings which stretched five cubits, and they overspread the Ark, which was deposited between them, and underneath their wings.

In the wide and most magnificent space before the veil, an Altar of brass was erected, a square of twenty cubits, and ten cubits high, whereon were laid the burnt-offerings. And near it stood the Brazen Sea, ten cubits in diameter and a hands-breath in thickness, made use of, to wash and purify the Sacrifices.

Here were also a number of golden tables for

the superb candlesticks, golden vessels and golden dishes. — One much larger than the rest, held the bread of God, called the shew bread. A number of chests for the habits of the Priests, their ephods, their girdles, and their silken vests; two hundred thousand trumpets, all sorts of musical instruments, harps, timbrels, and psalteries for the bands and for the Levites who chanted the hymns, accompanying the music with their voices. So magnificently did Solomon provide for the House of God. A structure for strength, and splendour, and beauty, unequalled in all the World. So stupendous no tongue could ever describe it, no eyes could comprehend, or even themselves give credit to what they beheld.

A work, the wonder of ages, thus speedily performed, Solomon directed all the golden vessels, and utensils he had prepared, to be carried into the Temple, he then sat down, and wrote circular letters to all his Nobles, his Generals, the Magistrates, Elders, and Rulers of all the Tribes of Israel, commanding them all to repair to Jerusalem. The grand Jubilee was so very near, he fixed on that time for their general meeting, to take a view of the Temple now finished, and accompany him, in removing the Ark of God into it. The time he appointed was also very near the

the feast of Tabernacles, the most solemn and grandest of all the Jewish Festivals.

At these very extraordinary seasons, in order to gratify the eager wish of all the People, to see this magnificent structure, now on its first opening, immensely great and almost universal was the national resort to the Capital. Very soon after, they took up the Ark, and all the utensils, the candlestick, and the golden table, and carried them into the Temple, placing them in the Holy of Holies, in the very same manner they had been accustomed to stand in the Tabernacle.

A most magnificent procession was exhibited. Solomon accompanied by all his Court, his Nobles, his General Officers, the Heads, Elders, and Chiefs of all the Tribes of Israel, walked before it.

The Ark supported by Priests, and Levites only, and the High-Priest, in his most pompous robes.

A numerous band of musicians followed it, playing a solemn march, awfully reverential and sacred.

A procession of Priests, two by two, bearing the utensils, the golden candlestick, the Altar of Incense, the Golden Table.

After

After them the men singers, and women singers, a Virgin Choir, cloathed in white, chanted Hymns, and Anthems, and Songs of Praise. They all thus ascended the four flights of steps, entered the grand Porch and the Temple, proceeding on towards the Ark, near the Veil and the Brazen Altar. The Priests alone entered the Holy of Holies, and even they instantaneously withdrew. The air rung all the while with the loud blast of trumpets, and the voices of all the Levites, celebrating the high praises of God, "For he is good, his mercy endureth for ever," "O' give thanks to the God of Gods, for his mercy endureth for ever."

No sooner was the Ark deposited underneath the wings of the Cherubims, and the Priests had with-drew from the Holy of Holies, but a thick and visible cloud descended in the Temple, and so totally obscured the light, the Priests and People could not see one another, and from out of this, soon was seen to issue a glory and brightness undefinable. God thus signally took possession of his Temple, and conspicuously filled it with the emblem of his Presence and Glory. The People with reverential awe, all cried out, God had entered into his Temple, God would reside amongst his People. The King had taken his seat, but he now instantly rose up, and commanded.

manded all, and every one present, to prostrate themselves before God, he devoutly lifted up his hands towards Heaven, in the most solemn manner he dedicated the Sacred building to God, addressing him audibly in fervent earnest prayer.

“ Thou Lord possessest an everlasting House, thou madest Heaven, Earth, Air, and Sea. All these thou fillest; nor can all these contain thee. This Temple I have built to thy Name, that in performing our Sacrifices, we may send up our supplications to God; persuaded thou art present here, and absent no where. Thy eye surveys the Universe, thou hearest all things, this Temple cannot prevent thy dwelling every where. A stranger to none, acquainted with all. But will God, indeed, dwell on Earth? behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, cannot contain thee. How much less, this house that I have built.

After this, Solomon descends to a variety of cases, and most eloquently, and earnestly and devoutly implores mercy, preservation, and forgiveness.

Though Solomon was thus fully persuaded God was every where, and could be excluded no where, yet he ambitiously inculcates the idea of
 God

God, under that of a tutelary Deity, always hearing, and propitious to the prayers offered up in the Temple of Jerusalem.

The King now turned round and addressed himself to his People, and he devoutly and most solemnly blessed them all.

Solomon then threw himself on the ground, and lay some time in a posture of adoration. When he rose up, he ordered the victims to be laid upon the Altar, and God was pleased to accept his offering; and in sight of all present, a flash of fire suddenly descended, and totally consumed the Sacrifice, the People were in raptures of joy, and they all fell down and worshipped. "God was come, to take up his abode in his Temple."

Solomon wisely availed himself of this pious disposition, and very awful solemnity, to impress on their minds, the necessity of perseverance, circumspection and right conduct. After he had offered up twenty thousand calves, and one hundred and twenty thousand lambs, peace-offerings for himself and for all his People, he broke up the assembly, and the King ordered the Hebrews, and their Wives, and all their Children, to be feasted with them.

Immensely

Immensely great was the first days Sacrifice, as numbers kept pouring in burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings in great profusion; conscientiously awed by the solemnities, the People were thus, one and all, religiously making their peace with God.

The ceremony begun the latter end of October, and lasted seven days, and a vast number of victims were every day brought in. At the expiration of this solemn Sacrifice and Dedication, immediately followed the feast of Tabernacles, this lasted another seven days, and it was celebrated in the Temple with astonishing splendour and magnificence; and Solomon with a Princely liberality entertained the whole People, and fed them all plentifully and sumptuously at his own expence. After fourteen days, thus religiously spent and in high festivity, when all was over, every one returned home to his own house, full of joy and the most hearty approbation, singing songs of praise and hymns to God. It seemed, not at all unlikely, that scenes of so much splendour and magnificence, might too much elate, too highly exalt the mind, even of this wise and amiable young Prince, and God was now pleased to re-present to him, in a dream, on the very first night of the Consecration and this Solemn Dedication of the Temple, that He accepted the Edifice he had built him, and was ready to renew his

his Promises to him and his Posterity, as long as, He, and they, should serve him with an upright heart; but in case they provoked him by Idolatry and disobedience, that very Temple, the wonder of the World, should infallibly become a desolation, a dwelling for owls and bats, a proverb and a reproach among all Nations.

After the building of this magnificent Temple, Solomon retained the masons, joiners, artificers, and various other workmen, and he employed them all in the City. Solomon first built a royal Palace for himself, and another for his Queen, the Daughter of Pharaoh, they were both adorned with all the embellishments of art, and with whatever his rich and immense Treasury could supply. He was almost thirteen years completing them, and there was in his own Palace one very magnificent and spacious apartment, called the Porch or Judgment-Hall, in which was erected his superb and highly elegant Throne, and on one side of it, were the benches for his Secretaries and Counsellors. This was the Seat of Judgment, the Throne for publick audience, where petitions were offered up, the addresses of his Nobles and foreign embassies received, where Ambassadors delivered their letters and credentials, and payed their homage, while here he sat enthroned in Sovereign pomp and royalty.

The

The Throne was of Ivory and inlaid with Gold; the ascent to it by six steps, each step, supported on either side, with a Lion couchant, and the two Arms upheld with two Lions standing, and they were each as big as life, all these, and even the steps themselves were covered with plates of gold. The Seat was supported by a Bullock couchant, and he was all of gold.

The Temple, and these royal Palaces with all their costly furniture, vessels, utensils and ornaments, all of pure gold, were finished in the space of twenty years. Jerusalem thus ennobled has been emblematically called the Forrest of Lebanon, from the immense quantities of Cedar, which so distinguishingly perfumed the Temple, and the Palaces. Lebanon seemed, as it were, transported to Jerusalem.

After these twenty years employ, Solomon sent back the masons and artificers, furnished by Hiram King of Tyre, and to shew his gratitude for the many valuable presents, and signal services which had been done him by that Prince, Solomon presented him with twenty Cities of Galilee, as they were the nearest adjoining to his own territories.

When the Tyrian King went to take a view of the Country, and the twenty Cities, which Solomon had presented to him, he expressed his dissatisfaction by refusing them, and he gave them a name of contempt, the word signified when interpreted, " dirty, displeasing."

Solomon afterwards built these Cities all anew and planted them with Colonies of his own People. Some few of the Tyrian artificers, chose to reside at Jerusalem, and now many of the Hebrews were become expert builders and workmen. Solomon employed them in surrounding the whole City, with a strong wall and stately Fortifications. He then sent them to build walls round many other Cities, and he erected a great number of store-houses, buildings for his carriages and his horses, large magazines and granaries for corn, wine, oil and provisions, and stores of ammunition. Also magnificent armories, and he hung them all round with shields and implements of War.

When Solomon appeared in publick, besides his Body-guards, three hundred golden Shields were always carried in state before him, on his return, they were all hung up on a stately row of pillars, an ornament at the grand entrance of his Palace.

In

In order to secure and perpetuate a free communication ~~between~~ his Kingdom and Syria, Solomon erected very strong fortresses, and built castles on Mount Lebanon, and he very soon after brought under his yoke, the remainder of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and he made them all his Tributaries.

God had now performed the promise made to Abraham, that his seed should possess the land, from the River of Egypt, to the great River, the River Euphrates, which now bounded Judea on the East, the land of the Philistines on the West, Egypt on the South, so that Syria, Damascus, Moab and Ammon, which all lay between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean Sea, were all in subjection and tributary.

Solomon as much as possible exempted his own subjects from all hard labour, and every kind of slavery, he appointed them Overseers, Officers, Guards and Soldiers in his Army, all the drudgery was performed by the Canaanites, and such foreign slaves from the Countries around, as were under his yoke, captives and in bondage to Israel.

Among the many Royal Visitors, the fame, wisdom, and grandeur of Solomon, drew to his

Court, the most considerable of all was Nicaulis, Queen of Sheba. — A Princess highly educated, of great knowledge, and vieing with the Jewish Monarch in opulence, state, and grandeur. The Chief of Arabia,* and Queen of all the South, a Country abounding with the richest perfumes, precious stones, and mines of gold.

Her sex, her dignity, her wealth, the remoteness of her abode, all greatly distinguished her, she came from the ends of the Earth (for the Sabæans were bounded only by the India Sea) to commune with Solomon, she had heard of his Fame, his Virtue and his Wisdom, of the splendour of his Court, his Palaces, and his Temple. She could not credit the one half of what she heard, inspired with curiosity, impatient to see him, she undertook a very long journey, from her own Country to Jerusalem, resolving to make inquiry herself, into the truth of reports given out by his sailors, so extraordinary, into the merits of a character so exalted and amiable.

She came in royal pomp, attended with a Princely train, a magnificent retinue, the luxuries and splendour of Arabia, Camels laden with

* Arabia Felix South of Canaan.

the richest perfumes, gold from her own mines, and precious stones of great brilliancy.

The arrival of the Queen was announced by her Servants, Solomon himself went out to meet her, and he received her, with all the respect due to her station, and the high honours she was doing to his Court. The Queen was astonished at the magnificence and beauty of the Palace, the pomp and state with which she was ushered in, the very respectful Ceremonies, the wise and curious contrivance, the elegant and masterly execution, and a beautiful, and ornamented part, called Lebanon Grove, raised her Wonder and admiration most of all.

With equal amazement, she viewed the splendour of his daily entertainments, the order and œconomy of his Household, the superb Liveries of his Servants, his Lords in waiting, the pomp of his Guard, and the exact and most respectful Decorum of all. Having now the honour of his conversation, she put to him (as was very usual among Princes) a number of abstruse and difficult questions, to inform her own judgment, and a trial of his skill and wisdom in resolving them. Solomon's sagacity excited much her wonder, and abundantly satisfied her respecting them all.

The

The King next introduced her into the Temple, and entertained her with a sight of its magnificence, the devotion and pomp of Jewish Worship, the Solemnity of Sacrifice, the Sacerdotal Habits, the reverential and sacred Awe of Priests and Levites, the veil over the Holy of Holies, unable to conceal these her new feelings and the rapture they had raised, the Queen could no longer dissemble impressions so powerful; inspired by all which, and the sanctity of the Religious Exercises and the Magnificence she beheld, bursts out in a kind of Ecstasy, " Verily
 " O' King, of your Virtues, your Wisdom and
 " your Riches, even talkative fame has said too
 " little." All indeed she has said is true, and
 " yet half is not told of your happiness. Fame
 " reports all she can tell, but the Majesty, Dig-
 " nity and Grandeur which my eyes see, could
 " never be told. Happy are the Hebrews, thy
 " servants, who every day see you, and hear your
 " wisdom, and blessed be the Lord God, so kind
 " to this Country and People, as to make thee,
 " King over them." After this polite and most
 elegant compliment, freely, as a Royal Queen, she
 presented Solomon with one hundred and twenty
 talents of gold; a cargo of spices and rich per-
 fumes, and precious stones of immense value.
 Solomon returned the Queen a variety of Eastern
 curiosities, an interchange of royal presents, and
 she

the full of wonder, and the high praises of the King, set out on her journey home, she and all her servants.

Hitherto, every thing we have seen, gives us the noblest and most pleasing idea of the wisdom, piety, and magnificence of this amiable and illustrious Monarch. No Prince was ever so distinguishingly honoured. No Reign so peaceable, prosperous and happy. Solomon had been repeatedly warned by his Father, by signal visitations, and by the Prophets, in the most serious moments of his life, and in dreams upon his bed, that the promises of God were conditional, annexed always to a virtuous conduct, and obedience to his laws. " If thou seek the Lord, he will be found of thee, if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."

Notwithstanding all these express and wise admonitions, Solomon became a slave to his passions, and an Idolater, he married a multitude of strange Wives, without distinction of Nation, Country, or Religion, and without the least regard to God's express commands and prohibition. Solomon suffered himself to be by them seduced into Pagan Worship, and all manner of Idolatry. He himself joined in the outward act of Idol Worship, and he partook of their feasts and abominations

minations. The number of his wives amounted to seven hundred, and he had three hundred concubines. Solomon built Altars and Temples, to all their different Gods, innumerable were their Idols and their Temples; the God of Moab was worshipped on the Mount of Olives, and Moloch the God of the Ammonites. Such a shameful defection and depravity could but be displeasing to God, and he appeared to him a third time in a dream, to warn him of his danger, and represent to him his criminal ingratitude, strongly impressing his mind, it should not go unpunished. On account of David his Father, he should reign over the Kingdom of Israel, as long as he himself lived, but after his death, two only of the twelve tribes should continue with his Son and his Grandson, ten tribes should be given to his Servant.

History no where records, whether so severe a denunciation, awakened him to Repentance. Solomon died in dishonour, and left the World inglorious.

He had reigned forty years, and was now only fifty-eight. They buried him in the stately Monument of his Father, in the City of David.

Solomon is said to have wrote a great number of Books, but we have only his Proverbs, his
book

book called Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, and the Canticles, all the rest are lost, as well as those of the Prophet Nathan, who had been his Tutor, and had himself wrote the Life and Reign of Solomon.

Ahijah and Iddo, two other Prophets, had also penned the History of this highly favoured Prince, and in a Reign so distinguishingly glorious, many interesting and very instructive events must have occurred, during forty years uninterrupted prosperity; we have therefore sincerely to regret, that the labour of no less than three Prophets, so illustriously recognizing a Character and Reign, held up to future ages, as an example of piety, prudence, caution and integrity, persevered in amidst the most splendid, bewitching, and alluring scenes of opulence, grandeur, and magnificence, should be all lost, as they would no doubt have been to us lessons wonderfully pleasing, and full of improvement.

The learning of the East, at that celebrated period, consisted much in witty sayings, pithy sentences, interpreting riddles, fables, and parables. Solomon at leisure, ease, and uninterrupted peace, conspicuously excelled in all such lively sports and fancies, he is said to have spoke more than three thousand, and it was the fashion-

able amusement of the times, to unveil their mystery, and set down in a party to resolve them. Princes, and neighbouring Kings sent their sayings and riddles to one another, the entertainment of a drawing room and a Court, it was a high honour to resolve them, and you submitted to a fine, when you gave up the pursuit ; it was often a sort of wager or bett, and a reward was held out to the person who unriddled them first. It is recorded of the King of Tyre, that he has often paid large sums of money to Solomon, for his superior expertness and many happy explanations.

Solomon is said to have equalled his Father as a Poet, and to have surpassed him as a Moralist. " God gave him wisdom, and understanding, and " largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on " the Sea shore." Majesty and mildness, Power and Pleasure wisely enjoyed, were the grand Supporters of his throne, and in the early part of his Reign, this Illustrious Heir of the house of David, exhibited all the Glory of sublunary greatness. Amiable, beloved, and revered. He possessed all the land, God had so graciously promised to Abraham, from the River of Egypt, to the great River, the River Euphrates. Syria, Damascus, Moab and Ammon, Kings and Empires were all of them tributary.

A Reign

A Reign divinely blessed with uninterrupted peace and prosperity, " Every man dwelt in safety under his own Vine, and under his own Fig tree, even all the days of Solomon." We have much reason, indeed, to lament the loss of his books, for this Prince, educated from early life by a Prophet, shone the first, and the greatest literary Character that ever wrote; his book of Proverbs contains many wise reflections and moral sayings concisely expressed, simple and plain, but solid and good—some very grave and serious exhortations, and others of them spirited, witty, and fanciful, the experienced Tutor wisely suiting the different ages and various capacities of his pupils. Solomon calls them, " Apples of gold, in pictures of silver," and very probably intended them as lessons to his children.

The book of Ecclesiastes, is a system more grave and devotional, becoming the Preacher, and adding dignity to the Pulpit.

His Songs, warm, gay, enthusiastic flights, Images and Metaphors ever varying, amazing were his Sallies of Fancy, but they were more than equalled by the graver Abilities and Solidity of his Judgment.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIII.

ON THE
REIGNS
OF THE
KINGS
OF
JUDAH.

REHOBOAM.

ABIJAM.

ASA.

JEHOSOPHAT.

JEHORAM.

AHAZIAH.

ATHALIAH.

JOASH.

AMAZIAH

UZZIAH.

JOTHAM.

AHAZ.

REHOBOAM.

R E H O B O A M.

NINE hundred, and seventy seven years, before the birth of our Saviour, and in the year of the World, 3027 ; upon the death of Solomon, Rehoboam his Son, by Naamah the Ammonitess, who was now arrived at the age of forty-one, set out, accompanied by the Elders, his Nobles, and his whole Court for Sechem, a City nearly in the centre of his Kingdom, and in the Tribe of Ephraim; Rehoboam there summoned all Israel to meet him, and pay him homage,

The People had long laboured under very burthenfome and heavy taxes ; they now humbly requested a redress of their grievances, and
dutifully

dutifully presented to him a petition they had drawn up, but to give it more weight, and incline him to attend to it, they at the same time forwarded an express into Egypt, and brought back Jeroboam, a highly spirited youth, once their Overseer, and he had long lived in full expectation and was inspired with the ambition of royalty. Jeroboam from motives of prudence, had fled from the presence of King Solomon, and retired into Egypt, where he was watching a favourable opportunity, and concealing himself from the notice and displeasure of his Prince.

Rehoboam on receiving the petition of the People, desired them to wait three days, during which time, he would assemble the Elders, and form a council from them, and his Nobles.

Men of years and experience (Privy Counsellors of his Father) were first summoned, and the advice of this Council was, to comply with the request of the People; with Zeal and Unanimity they all addressed the Prince, and assured him such conduct and acquiescence would be sure to gain him the love of his subjects, and engage them in his interests for ever.

A Council from among the young and inexperienced was next assembled, and they, well knowing the haughty pride and vanity of the Prince,
and

and yielding to his passions and his pleasure, advised him to this answer. " My little finger shall
 " be thicker than my Father's loins; my Father
 " did lade you, with a heavy yoke, I will add to
 " your yoke, my Father chastised you with
 " whips, I will chastise you with scorpions."

On the third day, Jeroboam, at the head of a great multitude assembled before Rehoboam, and this Prince blinded by the pomp of royalty, and judging it unworthy of his Majesty and Authority to yield to their demands, assumed all the Tyrant, and addressed them in the language of the young men. The insult set the People in a flame, one and all cried out, what portion have we in David? What inheritance in the Son of Jesse? To your Tents O' Israel! —To your Tents O' Israel!

Ten of the twelve Tribes instantly revolted from Rehoboam, Adoram his tax-gatherer, (an aged servant of his Father and Grand-Father) upon offering to name the taxes, was fell furiously upon by the populace, and they stoned him to death on the spot. The Prince was greatly terrified and alarmed, he ran hastily, mounted his chariot, and drove off full speed to his Capital. The City of Sechem was about two and thirty miles from Jerusalem. The ten revolting Tribes, blew the trumpets, and publicly proclaimed Jeroboam King over Israel. The Kingdoms of Judah, and Israel, ever after remained divided.

Rehoboam

Rehoboam appeared inexorable, he meditated revenge for the revolt, and the murder of Adoram. He raised a formidable Army, and marched out of Jerusalem at the head of a hundred and eighty thousand men, the Horrors of a civil war seemed inevitable, most mercifully to prevent them, Shemaiah the Prophet was sent to the Tribes of Judah and Benjamin, to tell them, it was the will of God, the division should remain as it was; as soon as this message was proclaimed through the Camp, each man returned to his own home, and the two Kings immediately set about fortifying and defending the frontiers of their Dominions.

Jeroboam dreading the danger of his subjects going up to worship at Jerusalem, as was usual on festivals, and viewing at that time the splendour of the City, the dresses of the Priests and the magnificence of the Temple, issued out a proclamation forbidding any of his People ever going up to worship or offer Sacrifice there.

Rehoboam during the space of three years, made no alteration in the religious Services, he is said to have worshipped God, as David, and as Solomon his Father, had done. At the end of that period, Rehoboam became an idolater, and built high places and groves, and set up graven images in them, and to express a total depravity,

he is said to have placed them under every green Tree. God was angry with Rehoboam, and He permitted him to be chastised by Egypt. Shishak King of Egypt entered his territories with an Army consisting of twelve hundred chariots, sixty thousand horse, and innumerable Troops and Allies. The Egyptian Monarch ravaged all the Country, laid siege to the fortified Cities, and took them, after which, he marched his Army up to the Capital. On this occasion Shemaiah, the Prophet, was sent again to Rehoboam, and he informed both King and People the visitation was from God; on account of their idolatry and disobedience, they should all be carried away Captive into Egypt. Lively, and most distressful, were the lamentations of King and People, and by thus humbling themselves before the Lord, by devoutly acknowledging their sins, and seeking earnestly to Him, they avoided a part of their punishment, and its severity. God would not utterly destroy Judah; they should now only become tributary. The Egyptian Monarch accompanied by his General-Officers, and a small part of his Army, marched through the City of Jerusalem, plundered the Temple and the Palaces, and carried away with them, all the golden shields which Solomon, when he rode in state, caused always to be carried before him, and which hung up in the Royal Portico, the superb entrance to his Palace.

After this very disgraceful plunder, and Shishak's return to Egypt, Rehoboam reigned twelve years in Judah, and died at Jerusalem, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, and in the seventeenth of his reign.

A B I J A M.

THIS Prince was a favourite Son of Rehoboam, by Maachah daughter of Abisalom. He ascended the Throne in the eighteenth year of his age, nine hundred and sixty years before the birth of Christ, in the year of the World 3044.

Abijam was an active, spirited young Prince, of great courage, and martial prowess. He commanded a powerful Army, of no less than four hundred thousand men, and with unwearied assiduity, and most eager zeal, he endeavoured to unite again the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel;
for

for this purpose he boldly marched his Army against Jeroboam, and encamped on the same Mount with the Army of Israel, and not very far from the borders of Ephraim. Jeroboam's Army consisted of twice the number of Abijam's. Both Kingdoms were idolaters, the true worship of God was neglected and laid aside in both. Abijam practised all the abominations of his Father, but notwithstanding he was an idolater, Abijam on the field of battle, in a spirited and studied speech, harangued the Army of his adversary, upbraided them sharply for their meanness and revolt, and even for their idolatry.

Jeroboam availed himself of Abijam's earnest warmth, and of what he was about, and by an artful piece of Generalship, filed off party after party, and by degrees surrounded his whole Army; in a moment and situation so alarming, the spirited young Prince and all his People, devoutly and most fervently addressed themselves to God in prayer. Abijam ordered the trumpets to sound, a general shout throughout all his Army, the battle to commence, and they gallantly fought their way, through all the troops of Israel, and so immense and bloody was the slaughter, they put to the sword five hundred thousand Israelites.

Jeroboam was hereby so much weakened and dismayed, he never had afterwards courage or strength to oppose Abijam.

Although this Prince acquired such great power, and inspired his troops with so much true spirit and magnanimity, Abijam reigned only three years, and then died at Jerusalem leaving (to lament his death) no less than fourteen Wives and two and twenty Sons.

A S A,

IN the year of the World, 3047, and nine hundred and fifty seven years before the birth of our Saviour, Afa, a Son of Abijam, at a very early age was proclaimed King of Judah.

Afa

Afa grew up an amiable and religious Prince, and by his wisdom and piety, he confirmed the establishment in Jerusalem to his family. As during the ten first years of his Reign, Afa was blest with peace, he had wisely and busily employed himself in destroying the heathenish abominations of his predecessors, and he deposed his own Grand-mother, for patronizing idolatry, the King burnt to ashes the idol she had set up, near the Brook Kidron, its name was Horror, and he commanded them to throw the powdered ashes into the water.

The People paid so much veneration, and had been so long indulged and accustomed to go up to worship on the high places, this truly virtuous Prince does not seem to have had influence and authority enough to suppress it, and many of them went up with very pious views and much seeming devotion. Afa's own heart was said to have been perfect with the Lord his God.

The King at this time set out on a journey through his Kingdom, to encourage his People in the true worship of Jehovah. Afa repaired and fortified his Cities, and all his important posts, the boundaries and frontiers of his Dominions, and he maintained a standing Army of five hundred and eighty thousand men.

It was soon after Afa's return, that his Kingdom was invaded. The King of Ethiopia entered Judæa with an Army consisting of no less than a million of Troops, and Zera the Ethiopian Prince commanded them in person. Afa's trust was in God, and the pious King addressed him in a very devout and fervent prayer, " Help us O Lord God, we rely upon Thee, in thy name we engage this multitude." Afa marched his Army against Zera, and he met him at Mareshah, a most bloody battle was fought, the Ethiopian Prince, and all his mighty Host were totally routed, Zera disgracefully fled back, and Afa returned home glorious and laden with spoils; the King made a most magnificent, and triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and dedicated his spoils to God his Deliverer, and to the service of the Temple. Afa then set about repairing the great Altar, and to celebrate his victory, sent an invitation to all strangers as well as natives, to come to the Temple, and join in the grand solemnities of worship, Afa with royal munificence on this occasion, offered up seven hundred oxen, and seven thousand sheep.

On the minds of all his subjects, the King awfully impressed the most sacred and solemn obligations to virtue, binding them by the conscientious appeal of an oath, devoutly taken at
the

the Altar, that they would continue the true worship of God to their lives end, and he issued out a proclamation and publick edict throughout his Kingdom, commanding all and every one of his subjects, who should be hereafter found to have broke this his solemn oath and engagement, to be punished with death.

Upon the King's pious, hearty, and very friendly invitation, many Israelites flocked to the Temple, attended its worship, and repaired afterwards to the standard of Afa.

Baasha the reigning King of Israel, seeing Afa's high prosperity and success, seized upon the City of Ramah, and began fortifying it, he thought it a valuable and important post, where he could place a guard, and prevent a communication between the two Kingdoms so injurious to his own. Afa was at this time suffering under a severe bodily illness, racked by a painful fit of the gout, and his conduct has been palliated by his sufferings and impatience under it. Afa forwarded an Embassy to the City of Damascus, and presented to Benhadad, a valuable and sacrilegious gift, of all the gold and silver in the Treasury of the Temple, and he asked his assistance against Israel. Afa wrote him to this effect. A league is yet subsisting between me and thee, and
between

between my Father and thine; I here present thee with gold and silver, come and break thy league with Baasha King of Israel; Benhadad, the Syrian Prince accepted his presents, and sent an Army to the northern parts of the Kingdom of Israel, which were the nearest to Damascus, but most remote from those parts where Baasha was employed, and he smote the Cities of Ijon and Dan, with those in their neighbourhood, and all the land of Naphtali—upon which Baasha desisted from his fortifications of Ramah, and went to defend his own Kingdom, and he drove off with speed to Tirzah his Capital. As soon as Baasha had left Ramah, Asa assembled all his People, none were exempted, and they took away the very stones of Ramah, and all the timber, and Asa built two other Cities with them, Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.

Upon the King's first application to Benhadad, Hanani the Prophet went immediately to the Palace, and he put Asa in mind of his many former conquests, and that, very signal one, over the mighty Host of Ethiopia, and prophetically told him, henceforth he should have war, his confidence in Syria was ill placed, for he well knew, his addresses and pious applications to God had hitherto been always answered; " the eyes of the Lord (the Prophet said) ran too and fro in the earth

“ earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of those
 “ who rely on him; herein thou hadst done foolishly.” On so grave and very serious a rebuke the King grew warm, and he ordered the Prophet under confinement in the prison-house.

Aza reigned three years after, but during the whole time he was languishing under a painful swelling and gout in his feet, and it is recorded of him (as blamable) that during his whole disease, he did not address himself to God, but to the Physicians only.

Aza died in the forty-first year of his Reign, his body was embalmed, and they laid him on a bed of state, and covered him with spices and odoriferous perfumes, and afterwards magnificently buried him in his own Sepulchre, in the City of David, in Jerusalem.



J E H O S O P H A T.

IN the thirty-fifth year of his age, Jehosaphat Son of Afa, ascended the Throne of Judah. In the year of the World 3087, and nine hundred and seventeen years before the birth of our Saviour.

Jehoram the eldest Son of this Prince, was highly pleased with the person of one of the Daughters of Ahab, King of Israel, and his Father gave his consent to his making her a proposal of Marriage.

Jehoram joyfully repaired to the Court of Samaria, Ahab politely received him, and granted

3087.

his

his request, Jehoram paid his addresses to Athaliah, and he married her; to celebrate this wedding, Ahab invited Jehosaphat to his Court, and very sumptuously entertained him. Israel and Syria were at this time engaged in War, and Ahab had already laid siege to Ramoth-Gilead, (a City then in the possession of the Syrians,) and he invited Jehosaphat his guest to accompany him to the Camp. The King of Judah, off his guard, most thoughtlessly assented; a bloody battle was fought before the Town; Ahab had changed his own dress and disguised himself, but he proposed to Jehosaphat to fight in his royal robes, for (says he) thou art no object of the Syrians rage; thus signally distinguished, Jehosaphat, by being taken for Ahab, was speedily in the very heat of all the battle. He was violently persecuted, and in the extremest danger; by a random shot, in this critical moment, Ahab was mortally wounded, furiously the battle raged, bleeding and dying, they held up Ahab in his chariot, to encourage his soldiers, and induce the Enemy (who had found him out) to believe him still animating his troops, and enforcing his commands. Ahab lived only until sun-set, and on his death a retreat was instantly sounded; the Israelites conveyed his body to Samaria, and there they buried him. His chariot, swimming with blood, was

washed in the Pool of Samaria, and the dogs came and licked his blood.

Jehosaphat's unwise assent, and mistaken conduct, was soon noticed and reproved, upon his return to Jerusalem the Prophet Jehu was sent to him, he gravely represented to the King, the error he had fallen into, how very improper it was in him to be aiding and assisting those, who professed themselves the Enemies of God. But notwithstanding (the Prophet added) he was directed to tell him, God would forgive and accept him, because he had taken away the Idolatrous Groves, and his heart was not alienated from his service; so very kind and gentle a reproof won upon the pious King, he set about clearing his whole Kingdom of all their idols and groves, and he went himself from Beer-sheba; even to Mount Ephraim, the two extremities of his Kingdom, and exhorted all his subjects to the true worship of God, and the King sent Levites round to every Town and City in his Kingdom, with correct copies of the law, and the five books of Moses.

On Jehosaphat's return to Jerusalem, he revised himself all his laws, civil and religious, publick and private, fortified his Cities, and garrisoned them, and he regulated and established an exact
economy

economy throughout all his family and household.

It was in the latter end of his reign, that the Moabites and Ammonites were confederates, and with a vast and formidable Army, they invaded Judæa, and proceeded as far as Engedi, within thirty-six miles of his Capital; Jehosophat very wisely and devoutly addressed himself to God, he began with proclaiming throughout all his Kingdom, a general fast. He called a council from among the Elders and Heads of all his People, and summoned his Nobles to Jerusalem. The King officiated himself in the services of the Temple, publicly and devoutly worshipping God, with all his People, and God by his Prophet Jehaziel, was graciously pleased to assure him of success and deliverance, and so speedy, it should happen on the very next day. Thus encouraged at day-break, Jehosophat arose and begun his march, when the Army came near Takon, he commanded them to halt, and the King there made a highly animating and pathetic speech to all his People, ending with a sure promise of Glory and Victory, would they but place a firm reliance and trust in God.

In the front of his Army, Jehosophat placed a row of singers, and musicians, directing them all
when

when the trumpets blew up, with heart and voice to burst out into one grand chorus. " Praise ye the Lord, for He is good, His mercy endureth for ever." When this Anthem was struck up, on hearing the Jewish music and the voices, the Enemy were so astonished, all was terror and alarm, a phrensy and general panick ran through all their Camp, furious and frantic, they fell upon one another, the Moabites and Ammonites, slaughtering and killing each other. A victory was thus obtained, and Judah had not drawn a sword.

Jehosophat as soon as ever he arrived at the field, found it covered over with the dead bodies of the slain, and the spoils were more than they could carry off; three whole days they gathered it, and on the fourth they assembled all together, returning thanks to God, their Almighty Deliverer.

Jehosophat, with his victorious Army, in high festivity, entered Jerusalem in triumph. The remainder of his life was peace uninterruptedly enjoyed.

The King now employed his People at home, in naval occupations, and he built ten ships to sail to Tarshish, and thence to Ophir to bring back

back gold. Ahaziah Son of Ahab, was then King of Israel, and he was very desirous of joining with Jehosaphat, in the advantages of this traffick and sea voyages, but the good King having been warned, and already chastised by God for this sin, shewed the sincerity of his repentance, by not suffering himself to be persuaded to repeat it.

During the four last years of Jehosaphat's reign, the King admitted his eldest Son to share with him, the honours of his Government, at the end of those four years, he died in his Palace at Jerusalem, and left Jehoram sole Regent, King of Judah.

A very magnificent tomb is still shewn in the Valley of Jehosaphat, cut out of a solid rock, divided into several apartments, in one of which, is seen his tomb, with a stately portico, and an entablature over it.

HERE ENDS THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.



JEHORAM

SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

J E H O R A M,

UPON the death of Jehosophat, Jehoram his Son at the age of thirty-two, was proclaimed King of Judah. Eight hundred and ninety two years before the birth of Christ, and in the year of the World, 3112.

Jehoram now reigned alone, and having lost the wife, religious restraint, and good advice of his Father, this young Prince became a slave to

3112.

prejudice

prejudice and passion, and exhibited a disposition and conduct, most unnatural, and unlike his Ancestors.

The reign of Jehoram, proved short; but it was full of ignominy and dishonour; the connection he had formed in early life, at the age of seventeen, with the impious and idolatrous daughter of Ahab, King of Israel, proved a sad source of family sorrow and disgrace, as this unhappy Prince, gave himself up entirely to the guidance of the Queen, a slave to her impiety, and all her odious abominations. Jehoram was not contented to become himself an Idolater, but he used his power and royal authority, to compel all his subjects to a like worship. His Reign was distinguishingly wicked and abandoned, unnaturally base, cruel and bloody. His Nobles, he wantonly murdered at pleasure, and assassinated no less than six young Princes, his own Brothers who by the wise appointment of his Father, occupied posts of honour, were Governors of Cities and liberally provided for by Government. Such gross impiety, and very criminal conduct, was not long unnoticed, a signal and very extraordinary punishment soon overtook Jehoram. Elijah the Prophet, wrote the King a letter, and sent it to the Palace, informing him, his deviation from the ways of his pious Ancestors, and

the cruel murder of his own Brothers (who were far more virtuous characters than himself) was highly displeasing to God, and it had brought down upon him His vengeance; the plague should now rage in Judæa, and destroy his subjects, a painful and incurable disease very shortly afflict himself; Jehoram endured the excruciating torments of a bloody flux two years, at the end of which time, his bowels gushed out, and the King in great agony expired. After his death, his royal Palace was plundered, his Wives and all his Sons carried away captive, except Ahaziah his youngest.

After Jehoram had reigned eight years, he died despised and unlamented. Without honour or even any shew of pomp or royalty he was buried privately in the Sepulchre of the Kings of Judah, and in the City of David.



AHAZIAH

A H A Z I A H,

AT the age of two and twenty, this young Prince succeeded his Father Jehoram. In the year of the World, 3120, and eight hundred and eighty-five years before the birth of our Saviour.

Ahaziah was a Son of Jehoram's by Athaliah Daughter of the King of Israel, and he was therefore a Son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

During a Reign of only one year, little is recorded of this young Prince, except a very un-usual and affectionate attachment to Jehoram,

the reigning King of Israel, together with his sudden death by order of Jehu, when that Prince was executing the vengeance of the Almighty on all the family of Ahab.

Soon after his proclamation and the ceremonies of his coronation in Jerusalem, Ahaziah set out on a visit to his Uncle, at the Court of Samaria. Jehoram in a bloody battle, he had lately fought, received a deep and dangerous wound, which confined him some months to his bed; Ahaziah bore him company all the time, respectfully attending upon him in person, alleviating his hours of sickness and pain, by daily intercourse and most friendly sympathy; a singular and very striking feature in the very short reign of this young Prince.

It was soon after Jehoram's recovery, when the two Kings were of a party together, the King of Israel was slain by Jehu, one of his General-Officers, and Jehu sent a detachment from his Troops to overtake Ahaziah; highly alarmed Ahaziah had crossed over a private road, which led through a garden not far from Megiddo, where he was overtaken, carried first to Samaria and afterwards slain at Megiddo.

The body of the King was from thence carried by his servants to Jerusalem, and laid in the
royal

royal Sepulchre. Ahaziah had ascended the throne of Judah only one year, and he left an infant Son, named Joash, who was concealed, together with his nurse in a bed-chamber in the Temple, and afterwards crowned in Jerusalem.

A T H A L I A H,

THE Daughter of Ahab, and Mother of Ahaziah, at this time Queen Dowager of Judah, usurped the Government in the year of the World, 3121, and eight hundred and eighty-four years before the birth of our Saviour.

The sad scene of bloodshed and distraction now at this period, with the fate of the Royal Families of both Israel and Judah, cannot be read without horror and weeping; Ahab's offspring all cut off for their idolatry, and the

unfortunate and ill-judged affinity of Jehoram, occasioned a total destruction, by three successive massacres, of the blood royal of Judah, one small branch only excepted, and he an infant in his nurses arms. Good Jehosaphat piously wished this union and family compact might have united the two Kingdoms under one head, and one religion, but it proved the sad source of the very worst calamities. Athaliah resolved David's family should not outlive Ahab's, and she murdered all the blood royal, utterly to extinguish the race of Jehosaphat, and secure, first for herself, and afterwards for her children, the Throne of Judah. Athaliah was thus glutting her revenge for the murder of all her Father Ahab's Family, and providing for her own defence against the persecution of Jehu, who had waded his way to the throne of Israel through the blood of three royal Princes, seventy Sons of Ahab, and all who were connected or related to the family. Jehu was employed as the rod of the Almighty, to execute his vengeance on the house of Ahab, and bring about this destruction of his family, and total revolution in the Empire.

Athaliah was, no doubt, viewing the death and extirpation of her family with horror, and the Queen gloried in the means of indulging her revenge.

From

From amidst the bloody and horrid slaughter at Jerusalem, an infant of a year old, was secreted by his Aunt Jehosheba, Sister to Ahaziah, and Daughter of Jehoram King of Judah, this Princess was married to Jehoida the High-Priest, and she, unknown to Athaliah, contrived first to hide him in a bed-chamber, and then convey him and his nurse, out of the Palace, to an apartment in the Temple, and the young Prince continued thus secreted under the care of his Uncle and Aunt six years, and in the seventh, the High-Priest summoned a council, concerted all his plans, with great judgment and privacy assembled the Nobles, Priests, Levites and Elders, and interested them all in favour of the young Prince, and the intended revolution, God (he said) was not unmindful of his promises to Judah. Jehoida then named a day for a publick meeting, and before the whole assembly, he produced Joash the young Prince, and caused every person present to take the oath of allegiance to him. The High-Priest had collected a large quantity of arms and he now supplied all the People with weapons of every sort, and thus accoutred, he divided them into three parties, one of which he appointed to act as Body-Guard to the person of the young Prince, and Jehoida now in the presence of all the People, placed the Crown upon the head of Joash, and the book of the law in his hand

hand, with these ensigns of justice and royalty, he anointed him, and with sound of trumpets, martial music and loud acclamations, Joash was proclaimed King of Judah. The Queen alarmed at the shouts, acclamations, and sound of trumpets, left her Palace, she ran hastily to the Temple, and to the porch belonging to the Priests, from whence she rushed into the midst of the assembly, in surprise and astonishment she beheld the infant King, with the Crown on his head, as he stood against a pillar, and the Nobles and Trumpeters around him, shouting, and blowing the trumpets; Athaliah roared out, Treason!—Treason!—in furious distraction she rent her hair, she rent her garments and she wept aloud; Jehoida commanded the Guard to seize the Queen's Person, and convey her out of the Temple, and slay all and every one who should attempt to rescue her. The soldiers dragged her to an outer-gate, and there they slew Athaliah. She had tyrannized over Judah six years, and the streets of Jerusalem had long been streaming with blood.

Jehoida, the High-Priest, now Viceroy and invested with the Supreme Authority, entered into a covenant with the People, and bound them by a most solemn engagement to serve the Lord, and he made another covenant between the infant
 King

King and his subjects. Jehoida then set out on a journey through the Kingdom, and in person assisted in pulling down and destroying all the images, demolishing their Altars and Temples, and with his own hands, as if divinely inspired, Jehoida slew Mattan, the High-Priest of Baal.

Jehoida purified the Temple at Jerusalem, from the corruptions and abominations which had crept into it, and he settled the young King in the royal Palace, after he had with so much spirit and bravery put him in possession of his Kingdom.

In this very signal manner, the providence of God, preserved the race of his servant David, when in danger of a total extinction.



J O A S H,

IN the year of the World, 3127, and eight hundred and seventy-eight years before Christ; at seven years of age, this young Prince began his Reign, and his Mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

Jehoida was Regent, in both religious and civil affairs, and he filled the posts of dignity and office, with his wife and brave assistants in the revolution, he restored the purity of the Worship of God, and the stated sacrifices and solemnities of the Temple.

Joash grew up religious and grateful, unweariedly zealous in the Worship of God, during all the life time of his Uncle, the High-Priest—He called to mind, that he owed his very signal

preservation to God, He had raised him to the Throne of Judah, to be a guardian to the Temple, and a restorer of its services and Worship. The Sons of Athaliah had impiously profaned it, broke up its Treasury, and wantonly defaced the building, and the King repaired the breaches, and raised a fund to defray the expence.

The life of Jehoida was lengthened out to the age of one hundred and thirty, and on account of his many and signal services, his royal connections, and very amiable and worthy character, he was buried with the Kings of Judah, in the royal Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

At the death of the High-Priest, the Princes and Jewish Nobles assembled, and came in a body to the Palace, and on being admitted to the King, they respectfully and submissively paid him homage, and offered up a petition to the throne, requesting leave to return to the worship of their former Gods, to set up their images, and bow down to Baal, Joash indolent and unguarded, weakly and most unwisely granted their petition. New Altars were instantly raised, new Idols made, their worship again introduced in all the high places and the groves, with their abominable and most execrable ceremonies. The Prophets instantly noticed the defection, and strenuously

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forewarned

forewarned them of the sad miseries, such conduct would assuredly bring both on King and People, wisely representing the baseness and high ingratitude of their idolatry—Judah was deaf to all admonition, and God permitted Hazael, King of Syria, with fire and sword to invade Judæa, and it was in the midst of their abominations and impiety, the Hebrews were all delivered into his hands. Hazael forwarded all his rich spoils to Damascus, and marched his Army up to Jerusalem, plundering and slaughtering throughout every City; Joash stript the Temple, and his royal Palace, of their immense riches and magnificent furniture, and gave them all a ransom to the Syrian Conqueror; Hazael thereupon returned back, and (elated with his high honours) entered Damascus in triumph; Joash was at that time, severely suffering under a bodily disease, but it had not yet endangered his life, he was murdered in his bed by Zadab and Jehozadab, two of his servants, at the head of a conspiracy at home. Joash had reigned forty years in Jerusalem, and they buried him in the royal Sepulchre in the City of David.

AMAZIAH.

A M A Z I A H.

THIS young Prince, the Son of Joash, at his Father's death, ascended the Throne, and was crowned in Jerusalem, eight hundred and thirty-eight years before the birth of Christ, and in the year of the World, 3167.

Soon after his coronation, Amaziah called a council from his Nobles, and Heads of his People, and he caused the two murderers of his Father to be brought before him, and ordered them to a publick execution. This was the young King's wife, and first exertion of his power. The commencement of his Reign was distinguished for piety, and by many glorious victories, he maintained an Army of three hundred thousand men, and he took into his pay, a hundred thousand more of Israel, at a time he was marching

a powerful Army against Edom, but a little before he entered their Country, Amaziah thinking his own Army sufficiently powerful, he dismissed all the Israelites, and sent them home.

Amaziah's expedition against Edom, was highly successful; he returned laden with riches and spoils, but amongst his other treasure, he brought with him the Images and Idols of the Edomites, and now intoxicated with the honours and glory of his success, Amaziah caused them to be set up in Jerusalem, and he burnt incense himself before them. Fruitless, and all in vain, were the reproofs and exhortations of the Prophets, no reasoning would reclaim Amaziah, and God left him to the sufferings and sad effects of his impiety.

As the hundred thousand Troops (which had been hired by the King) were passing back through the Towns and Cities of Judah, disappointed and angry at their dismissal, they pilfered, plundered and laid waste the Country. Amaziah elated by his late Victories, and now in the moment of Triumph, heard of their conduct with much displeasure, and instantly resolved to revenge the damages, his people and his cities had sustained. Self-confident and vain, Amaziah sent a Challenge to the
King

King of Israel, and he haughtily said, " Come let us look one another in the face" The answer returned by Joas, was couched in sovereign disdain; it (was familiar with the Jews, to wrap up their language in Allegory) and Joas wrote him, " The Thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, " give thy Daughter to my Son to wife," and there passed by a wild beast and trod down the Thistle, with no less ease shall my soldiers tread down thee and thy Army; Amaziah fired with the insult, hastily marched with all his Forces to meet Joas, but the Army of Judah was totally defeated, and Amaziah taken prisoner, the King of Israel led his victorious Troops all through Judæa, entered Jerusalem in triumph, he broke down four hundred cubits of its strong Walls, and some of its strongest Towers and Fortifications, plundered the Temple and royal Palaces; laden with its treasures and his spoils, and as many hostages as he chose to demand, He left Amaziah at Jerusalem and marched his Army back to Samaria, enjoying the high honours of a second Triumph.

After this sore disgrace and total defeat, Amaziah, lived fifteen years in Jerusalem, at that time his Nobles formed a Conspiracy to take away his life, upon which, he fled to La-
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chish, a City on the Frontiers of Judah, he did not escape the snares they had lain for him, they pursued him to Lachish, and Amaziah was there put to death.

His servants laid his Body across a horse, without state, or even decency, and they placed him in the royal Sepulchre, in the City of David in Jerusalem.

U Z Z I A H.

AT the age of sixteen, this amiable young Prince, succeeded Amaziah his Father. In the year of the World, three thousand one hundred and ninety-six, and eight hundred and nine years before Christ, King Uzziah was crowned at Jerusalem.

In the early part of this Prince's reign, he was distinguished for his piety and religious Zeal, pious himself, and well advised, he promoted the worship of God throughout all his Kingdom. God was pleased to bless and prosper his reign, many were his honours and much his success, he engaged the Philistine Army, the Arabs and the Ammonites, and he returned victorious from them all. Uzziah, watchful over the prosperity of Jerusalem, repaired the Wall the Israelitish King had so insultingly broken down, and he fortified it with Turrets and strong Towers, adding greatly to its security, and they were advantageous posts of assault. Uzziah, constructed Machines in them for throwing darts, stones, and other destructive weapons from the Bulwarks, the Machinery afforded a wonderful proof of the progress, and dexterity of the Engineers, of that period. In many of his Cities, as well as at Jerusalem, Uzziah, erected large store-houses, and he supplied them with all necessaries, and with Arms and implements of War. This Prince, applied himself to the study of Agriculture as a science, and grew wealthy from his over-abounding Crops. He fed very numerous Herds of Cattle; and he dug wells every where to supply them. Uzziah planted many Vine-yards, and built cots for all his husbandmen, and Vine-dressers. In time of

Peace, he was thus usefully and happily employed, but Uzziah's highest glory was in Arms. He maintained an Army of two thousand six hundred brave officers, all men of war, and three hundred and seven thousand five hundred soldiers, completely armed.

In high prosperity, pious, innocent, and happy, Uzziah reigned three and thirty years, during the life time of a truly eminent and wise man, named Zachariah, who had been his favourite adviser and friend, but after the death of this faithful and worthy counsellor, Uzziah's ambition, having no friendly eye to check it, his high honours and dignities so elated him, that he would ostentatiously burn incense himself, upon the Altar before the Lord, the High-Priest and fourscore other Priests all followed the King to the Temple, and there most respectfully told him, it was their office only to burn the Incense, an office solemnly allotted to the Sons of Aaron, the King unused to opposition and impatient of reproof, in a moment of warmth and vanity, the censer in his hand, held it up in an angry threat, and Uzziah was instantly struck with a leprosy, the High-Priest was the first who spied it in his forehead, thus degraded and polluted, a loathsome leper, the King walked silently out of the Temple, and through the City, quite beyond the gates

gates, to a lone house in the fields, as no leper, be he ever so highly ranked, was ever admitted to live within the City Walls.

From this most horrid disease, Uzziah never afterwards recovered, the remainder of his life was passed only by himself. A punishment wisely calculated to convince him of his crime, as it rendered him incapable of attending on publick Worship ever after.

Under the title of Viceroy, Jotham his Son took upon him the administration until the death of his Father. Uzziah reigned two and fifty years, and then died at the age of sixty-eight, and they buried him in the field, where the royal Sepulchres were built, but a leper was always placed apart, and by himself, at a wide distance from his Ancestors.



J O T H A M.

SINCE the disgrace and sufferings of his Father, this young Prince had been invested with the Supreme Authority under the title of Viceroy.

Jotham was now proclaimed King of Judah, and he was at the age of twenty-five, his Mother's name was Jerusha, and of the family of Zadoc.

In the year of the World, 3248, and seven hundred and fifty-seven years before the coming of our Saviour.

Jotham was a wise, powerful, and religious Prince, inheriting all his Father's virtues, without the sad and destructive allay of ambition and vanity, and Uzziah himself seemed only to have
acquired

acquired it in the latter period of his reign, when he had lost his wife adviser, and was blinded by the too glaring lustre and honours of royalty.

A magnificent, beautiful new gate, was now built to the Temple, and Jotham erected many other superb structures, both for ornament and use; this Prince was a spirited and valiant Commander, he engaged the Ammonites in several battles, and made them tributary to Judah, and they brought every year to Jerusalem, one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand measures of wheat, and a like quantity of barley.

Jotham was his own General, headed his Troops, and marched in person with his Army. He returned victorious from all his expeditions, and never lost a battle. He fought with Rezin, King of Syria, and Pekah King of Israel, but the union of these two kingdoms, and their confederacy against Judah, did not fall out until the reign of Ahaz his Son.

At the end of a prosperous and glorious reign of sixteen years, King Jotham died, aged only forty-one, and was buried with his Fathers in the City of David, in Jerusalem.

AHAZ

A H A Z.

THIS young Prince had only attained to the age of twenty, when at the Death of his Father, he ascended the Throne of Judah; in the year of the World, three thousand, two hundred sixty-three, and seven hundred and forty-one years before Christ.

Ahaz was a Prince so ill principled, abandoned and wicked, that he totally degenerated from the piety of his Ancestors, and caused to be made a number of molten Images, sacrificing and burning incense on the high places, the hills, and the groves, and under every green tree, where he had impiously set up his Idols and his Gods. At Hinnon, in the very neighbourhood of his Metropolis, he commanded his own Son to pass through the fire, conforming to the superstitious rites, and worship of the Heathens, the original Inhabitants

of Canaan, whom God for those very abominations, and acts of impiety, had extirpated root and branch from thence.

It was at this time, a confederate Alliance took place between Syria and Israel, they united their forces, and marched them into Judæa, and laid siege to Jerusalem.

Ahaz was forely alarmed and altogether unprepared; while he stood trembling and in high consternation, Isaiah the Prophet, entered the Palace, and requested an audience with the King. The two powerful Armies of Syria and Israel had furrounded the City Walls, and threatened a total overthrow of the Empire; in this moment of distraction and despair, the Prophet mildly told Ahaz, "Your Enemies will try their strength in vain," and to gain his confidence, Isaiah desired him (as was the custom of the times) to ask a sign from God; any proof whatsoever you shall now require, God will grant it you; either out of respect or despondency, Ahaz, would ask nothing.

The King appeared fullen and disconsolate, and the Prophet in order to comfort him, and convince him of the truth of his Message
kindly

kindly condescends to reason with Ahaz, and reminded him of the well-known prediction of Jacob, that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, until Shiloh (the right owner) meaning the Messiah should come; and the Prophet then most expressly added, before Jerusalem be destroyed, a Virgin should conceive and bear a Son, and his Name Immanuel, God with us, and the Prophet appealed to the King, if as yet, either of these had happened.

The confederate Kings, after they, and their Armies, had fruitlessly surrounded Jerusalem, plainly saw all their attempts would be ineffectual, chagrined and disappointed, they marched their Armies back, wantonly plundering and cruelly treating all the inhabitants through the Towns, and Cities, and Country they passed along. Rezin, the Syrian Prince, laden with jewissh Spoils entered Damascus his Capital in triumph, and Pekah King of Israel put to the Sword one hundred and twenty thousand Men, and carried away captive two hundred thousand Women and Children.

Great and sad were his losses, and the horrors of his late alarm; notwithstanding, Ahaz, gave himself wholly up to his heathenish Abominations, and Idolatry. He had seen the
suggestions

suggestions of the Prophet in some measure verified, he had lost in one battle, one hundred and twenty thousand of his bravest Troops, besides his own Son Maaseiah, the Master of his household, and Elkanah the third in authority in Judah, and numbers of the People, who had been carried away captive. Yet Ahaz still publicly sacrificed to the Gods of Damascus, alledging, this as a reason, the prosperity of Syria was owing to their Worship and their Gods. In open defiance, or at least in distrust of the God of Israel, Ahaz called in foreign aid to his assistance, he was still sorely oppressed and persecuted by Syria, upon which the King sent an Embassy to Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria, and he accompanied it with a royal present of all the money, both in his own Treasury, and in the Treasury of the Temple, and he said, " I am thy Servant and thy Son;" I yield myself to thee, to serve, obey, and pay thee tribute, upon condition thou come up, and save me from the hands of my enemies. The Assyrian Prince accepted his present and proposals, he marched with his Army against Damascus, and took it, and Rezin the Syrian King was there slain. Upon this successful enterprize, Ahaz went up to Damascus to meet the Conqueror, and congratulate him on his Victory, making him high acknowledgments for his favour and assistance, while Ahaz was on

this visit, he was wonderfully struck with a Syrian Altar he there saw, of a beautiful structure, and he sent a pattern of it to Urijah his High-Priest at Jerusalem, and commanded him to cause an Altar to be built of that fashion against his return. Urijah obeyed the orders of his Sovereign, the Altar, according to the model sent, was completed, and Ahaz offered up incense himself upon it, and a vast number of heathenish sacrifices; very soon after, the King put a stop to the daily services of the Temple, and he shut it up; new Altars after the Syrian Model were set up in every corner of Jerusalem, to the honour of the Gods of Damascus.

With such infamous and abominable depravity, this Idolatrous Prince uninterruptedly adhered to the Syrian Worship, to their 'Idols and their Gods. Ahaz finished a miserable reign in the thirty-sixth year of his age, and sixteen years after he had ascended the throne of Judah.

He was buried in Jerusalem, in a place by himself, as the Elders and Nobles of Judah did not think him worthy of being interred in the magnificent Sepulchre of his Ancestors.

E S S A Y XIV.

CONCLUSION OF THE REIGNS OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

HEZEKIAH.

MANASSEH.

AMON.

JOSIAH.

JEHOAHAZ.

JEHOIAKIM.

JEHOIACHIN and

ZEDEKIAH.

H E Z E K I A H.

AHAZ was succeeded by his Son Hezekiah. This Prince was in the twenty-fifth year of his age, his Mother's name was Abi, and she was Daughter of Zachariah. A Princess of true piety, who in the midst of a corrupt and most abandoned Court, had attended to the principles, morals, and religious education of her Son.

In the year of the World, 3278, and seven hundred and twenty-six years before the birth of our Saviour.

This amiable, and best of Princes, was well acquainted with the sad sources of Judah's misfortunes, he therefore in right earnest, and with religious zeal, set about retrieving them. Heze-

kiah wisely begun with opening the Temple, and re-instituting the Priests and Levites in their office, enforcing both by his authority, and example, the constant daily worship of God, according to the Law of Moses. He began on the first day of the new year, and it was the Sabbath, the whole service was then prepared and completed. The King assembled all his Elders and Nobles, the Princes and Chiefs of the Tribe of Judah, the Priests and Levites, and all his People, they formed a grand procession, and moved towards the Temple, the air resounding with the solemn blast of trumpets, and loud sounding cymbals, a band of sacred music, and men-fingers and women-fingers chanting Psalms, and Hymns of praise, in full Majestic chorus. The Jewish ancient music, accompanied the voices all through the Temple, which re-echoed with the shouts, and general joy of King and People, devotionally employed in prayer and praise.

Hezekiah assisted at the Altar, and with true piety, witnessed the solemnities of sacrifice, and offered up, for the sins of all his People, peace-offerings without number.

A whole Nation thus devoutly engaged in abolishing Idolatry, with reverence joining heart and
voice

voice in thanksgivings to God, must have been a sight full of joy and satisfaction.

Hezekiah, liberal and wise, was unwilling to confine the religious exercises, and worship of God, to his own Kingdom, he wrote himself a serious and pathetic letter, to all the Israelites in the neighbouring Provinces, reproving them for their Idolatry, the sad and evident source of their sufferings, and in order to a reformation of that deluded and unhappy Kingdom, he earnestly exhorted them to the true worship of God, and invited them all to keep the next Pass-over Feast with him, in the Temple at Jerusalem, and very many of them actually came.

Inspired by the piety, and animating example of their Prince, the People were all resolute and active in demolishing Idols, Altars, every heathenish monument and grove, in, and about Jerusalem, and the whole City was altogether cleared. Hezekiah removed the Groves and High Places, which none of his predecessors before, had influence or resolution enough to do. He next made an exact scrutiny into the genealogie of the Priests, and Levites, and established their several classes, after the model of David, and the King provided largely for the maintenance of them all.

As

As soon as he found himself sufficiently powerful, he freed Judah from the annual tribute paid to the King of Assyria, and re-assumed that independent Sovereignty, God had settled in the house of David. Hezekiah marched with his Army against the Philistines, and recovered all the Cities they had taken from Judah, during the unhappy reign of Ahaz his Father.

Senna-Cherib, King of Assyria, contented himself with receiving the Jewish tribute as long as it was paid, but on its being withheld, he marched into Judæa at the head of a numerous Army, he laid siege to all the fortified Cities and Towns he passed through, and threatened a total destruction to the Empire.

Hezekiah was sadly distressed, and now all submission, the King saw his error, but it was too late, the Assyrian Prince had fixed his head quarters at Lachish, Hezekiah forwarded an Embassy, and accompanied it with the richest presents, stripping both his Palace and the Temple to furnish them, he promised a full and unequivocal assent to whatsoever terms his Assyrian Majesty should think proper to impose. The Haughty Conqueror demanded three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. Senna-Cherib, then only ordered his Troops
back

back to Lachish, and permitted them still to ravage on the frontiers of Judah.

It was not long before he dispatched from hence, Tartan, Rabfaris and Rabshakeh, three General Officers, with a powerful Army again to lay siege to Jerusalem.

Hezekiah had busily employed himself, made a brave defence, fortified the City, repaired the walls, built a second wall all round it, fenced it with Towers, collected a large store of provisions dried up all the springs in the suburbs, and turned the Brook Gihon into the City, to deprive the enemy as much as possible of all supplies, and pour in plenty of water into Jerusalem. After these wise and vigorous measures for enduring a siege, Hezekiah summoned his Council, his Officers, and Generals, and in an able and pious speech encouraged them to fortitude, becoming valour, and devout reliance on God.

At the very pressing, and earnest request of his Nobles and People, Hezekiah had assented to forward an Embassy to Ethiopia, asking their assistance in this his great extremity and deep distress, a numerous Army was immediately sent for the relief of Jerusalem, but they were all routed and cut to pieces by Senna-Cherib, and with so horrible

horrible a slaughter, no one was left even to bury the dead.

The three Assyrian Captains, insultingly parading, and surveying the City, stood by the Conduit of the upper Pool, in the Highway, and made signs for a conference with the King. Hezekiah, sorely alarmed, sent three confidential Servants, the Steward of his household, his Secretary, and Joash, the Son of Asaph his Recorder; Rab-shakeh, with haughty insolence, ordered them to go carry Hezekiah this message from the King of Assyria.

In whom placest thou thy trust? Is Egypt thy staff? behold he is as weak as a bruised reed, on which if a man lean, it will splinter and pierce him—but does he trust in the Lord his God? is not that He, whose high places, and groves, and Altars he has burnt and destroyed? Hear ye, my proposal; give pledges now to my Lord the King, and I will deliver you two thousand horses, but ye are so destitute of men, ye cannot even set riders upon them.

Am I come up without the Lord against Jerusalem to destroy it? The Lord said to me, go ye up against this land and destroy it. (How terrifying to the Jews to be told, he was executing a

commission from Jehovah.) The Jewish Chiefs, shocked that the People should hear such language, submissively told Rab-shakeh, we understand the Syrian tongue, I pray you speak to thy servants, and not in the ears of all the People on the wall. He insolently replied, are we not sent to all the men now listening on the wall? (and turning from the Jewish Chiefs, and speaking directly to the People) soon shall we reduce you to such extremity, you will eat, each man his own dung for hunger—let not Hezekiah deceive you—he is not able to deliver you—he tells you to trust in the Lord, but your City will surely be delivered up to us. Harken to the King of Assyria. Make a league with me by a present—come ye out to me, and then, eat ye every man of his own Vine, and every one of his Fig-tree, and drink ye every one of the waters of his Cistern, until I come and take you away to a land like your own, a land of corn and wine, of bread and Vine-yards, of oil olive, and honey, that ye all may live and not die. Hath any of the Gods of the Nations delivered them out of the hands of the King of Assyria? Have they delivered Samaria? and do you expect deliverance for Jerusalem?

The People all held their peace. Hezekiah had expressly commanded—answer them not.
Eliakim,

Eliakim, Shebna and Joash the Jewish Chiefs, like deep mourners, with their clothes rent, came to Hezekiah and told him all the words of Rabshakeh. The King rent his clothes, in token of sorrow, and covered himself with sack-cloth, and went immediately to the Temple, and sent the three mourning chiefs, covered with sack-cloth, to tell the sad story to the Prophet Isaiah. Hezekiah most humbly offered up to God, with all his People, an animated and very pathetic prayer, as soon as he had done, on seeing the Prophet, the King piteously implored his intercession, and prayer to God on behalf of his Country; Upon which Isaiah revives and comforts Hezekiah. Be not afraid, for thus saith the Lord, behold I will send a blast upon thine enemy, he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land, and fall by the Sword in his own land.

Tirakahah, King of Ethiopia, incensed at the ill success and loss of his Troops, marched a powerful Army into Assyria; Senna-Cherib was under the necessity of going home, to drive him back, and defend his own territories, but before he set off, he wrote a most insulting letter to Hezekiah, he would shortly return, and with redoubled fury batter down the walls of Jerusalem. For (he told him) he set at nought the God of Hezekiah.

M m m 2

The

The King, under great terror and alarm, received the letter himself from the hand of the messenger and read it, then went immediately to the Temple, and there held a council with his Elders and Nobles, after which, he in the most humble manner prostrated himself before God, and in a fervent and devout prayer, spread all his anxieties before him.

“ O Lord God of Israel, bow down thine ear
 “ and hear, open thine eyes and see, hear thou
 “ the words of Senna-Cherib, his reproaches of
 “ the living God, O Lord our God, I beseech
 “ thee save us out of his hand.”

Hezekiah's pious address was scarcely finished, when he received a gracious answer from God, delivered by the Prophet. That although Senna-Cherib would indeed return, yet God would protect Jerusalem. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, that which thou hast prayed to me concerning Senna-Cherib, I have heard, and this is the word the Lord hath spoken, concerning him.

“ The Virgin, the Daughter of Zion hath
 “ despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn. The
 “ Daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at
 “ thee (in derision.) Whom hast thou reproached
 “ and

“ and blasphemed, even the Holy One of
 “ Israel? I know thy abode, thy going out and
 “ thy coming in, and thy rage is before me; be-
 “ cause thy rage and thy tumult is come up into
 “ mine ears—behold I will put my Hook into thy
 “ nose, and my Bridle between thy lips, and I
 “ will turn thee back, by the way in which thou
 “ camest.”

And it came to pass that very night, (possibly the night preceeding a general storm) the Angel of the Lord went out, and smote by a pestilence, in the Assyrian Camp, one hundred, fourscore, and five thousand. At day-break on seeing the dead bodies filling the tents, and covering the plain, Senna-Cherib, full of shame and confusion returned back ingloriously to Nineveh.

Thus was Jerusalem delivered in the very moment of destruction, and Isaiah's prediction respecting this haughty Tyrant exactly fulfilled, as was also the prophecy respecting his death, for as he was worshipping in the Temple of his God, he was assassinated by two of his own Sons, who afterwards fled and made their escape out of the Kingdom.

Another visit of the Prophets is recorded, when Hezekiah was sick, Isaiah forewarns the King to
 set

set his affairs in order, make his will, and appoint his successor, for he would surely die.

Hezekiah ascended the Throne at twenty-five, and he was now only thirty-eight; his Kingdom was in danger; as yet he had no heir; the summons sudden and alarming; the King therefore received it with inexpressible grief, and in a humble and devout prayer, with his face towards the wall, and in a flood of tears, he passionately poured out his soul before God. The Prophet had taken his leave, he was now in the middle Court and going out of the Palace, when he was commanded to return, and inform Hezekiah, God had heard his prayer, he should recover from his disease, and in three days time, acquire so much health and strength, as to be able to offer up public thanks to God in the Temple, in the midst of all his People, and more-over fifteen years longer should be added to his life. The King's disease was probably a quinsy, upon the application of a fig, the tumour ripened and broke, and his cure immediately followed.

It was on this occasion Isaiah gave a signal proof of his high Prophetic office, a retrogradation of ten degrees of the sun's shadow, on the dial of Ahaz, and to gain the King's confidence and comfort him the more, he left it to him to chuse, whether

whether the shadow should go ten degrees forward, or retire ten degrees back; the King said, should the shadow go down ten degrees, it will be less noticed and extraordinary, and he chose it should return backward. On the Prophet's prayer, the shadow on the dial of the royal Palace, was instantly brought ten degrees back.

Under the grateful impressions of so merciful a providence, Hezekiah composed a divine Ode, expressive of his own anguish of soul, and the infinite goodness of his God.

This best of Princes, too much elated by so many blessings and deliverances, with which God had distinguishingly honoured him, and now opulent and very powerful, enriched with the spoils of his enemies, and in the full enjoyment of his blessings, Berodach-baladan, the Son of the King Babylon, sent presents and letters of congratulation to Hezekiah on his recovery, and he noticed the amazing prodigy of the Sun's retrogression, a phenomenon which had been observed, and much spoken of, in foreign countries, and particularly in Egypt, as the Egyptians were great astronomers. Hezekiah incautiously entertained the Ambassadors with a sight of his immense riches, his grandeur and magnificence, the Fortifications and strength of his walls, his Store-
houses.

houses and armory. Isaiah saw them at the Palace, and enquired of his Majesty who those men were, Hezekiah very innocently told him, they were foreigners, come from a far Country, even from Babylon, the King had sent them to congratulate him on his recovery, and he had just now shewn them his Treasury, Palaces, and Fortifications, the Temple, his Armory and Stores, upon hearing which, the Prophet very gravely represented to him, his vanity, weakness and pride, strikingly telling the King, those very Babylonians, who had just glutted their eyes with the glory of his Palaces and Treasury, would shortly strip them of all their valuables, carry his Children captives to Babylon, and make his Sons Eunuchs in the Palace of their Prince. Hezekiah mildly answered,

“ Good is the word of the Lord; is it not good? If peace and truth be in my days.”

I submit, the sentence is just and merciful, a punishment less than I deserve, in that the evil is deferred, and does not immediately follow my sin.

This Prince improved the City of Jerusalem by elegant buildings, Store-houses, Magazines, and a spacious Armory; and he added much to its strength and security by many new Fortifications.

He

He planned a new aquæduct, in a very convenient part of the City, and it afforded a large supply of water to the inhabitants. He constantly kept in pay a number of skilful scribes, and always employed them in writing copies of the five Books of Moses, and others of the sacred Canon, and the King sent, and dispersed them every year, to all the Cities and Towns in his Kingdom.

According to the Prophets prediction, Hezekiah died in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and twenty-ninth of his Reign, and was buried in the chiefest of the Royal Sepulchres, with superb splendour and magnificence, distinguishingly solemnized throughout the City and the whole Kingdom.

The Sepulchre was a large court of one hundred and twenty feet square, forming a sumptuous area, surrounded with a spacious cloyster supported with pillars. Every part was cut out of a solid marble rock. The cloyster led you on to a magnificent hall, with stone doors, twenty four feet square. Many lesser apartments surrounded the hall, on the sides of which were niches, in which the marble coffins of the King's were deposited, the body of Hezekiah was placed in a niche in the innermost of all, to confer the greatest honour on this pious and very amiable Prince.

M A N A S S E H.

THIS young Prince was only twelve years old when his Father, good King Hezekiah died, at this early age, Manasseh ascended the Throne of Judah, and was crowned in Jerusalem, six hundred and ninety-seven years before the birth of our Saviour, and in the year of the World, three thousand, three hundred and seven.

Brutish, and vicious from inclination, Manasseh was very unfortunate in his first counsellors and advisers, he began his Reign in direct opposition to all the wise principles, plans, and customs of his pious Father, and he seemed purposely designing, and obstinately determined to undo, all the good his Father had been doing.

Manasseh gave himself up, to the high indulgence of his passions and his pleasures, he was
impious,

impious, tyrannical and an Idolater; he introduced even into the service of the Temple, the vilest idolatries, he caused an Idol to be set up in the Holy of Holies, and to be there publicly worshipped with heathenish abominations and ceremonies, and both the areas and grand entrance of the Temple he filled with Altars, erected to Baal and all the Stars and Host of Heaven.

Manasseh, amongst other execrable and heathenish ceremonies, caused his Son to pass through the fire, and he observed days, lucky or unlucky seasons, for dispatch of business, and even practised witchcraft and enchantments.

The Prophets, distressed and alarmed, severely reprimanded the King, expostulated and threatened him for his open violation of the laws, and sacrilegious impiety, and with zeal and animation told him, God would bring down such evils on Jerusalem, the very horror of hearing them named would make his ears to tingle, in his vengeance God would turn his Kingdom upside down as a dish, empty it of its inhabitants, and cut it off from all hopes of restitution.

Such language, Manasseh held in derision, and this Idolatrous Prince treated the Prophets with the highest indignity and insolence, he shed the

blood of many of them, and Isaiah though allied to royalty, is said at this time to have been sawn asunder and with a wooden Saw. The King practised the most wicked and cruel severity on all who refused to fall down and worship the Idols and the Gods he had set up. Jerusalem became the scene of the most horrid Butcheries, and the Metropolis streamed with the blood of his Nobles, his Prophets, his Priests and his People.

At length, Providence was pleased to put a signal stop to his career, and the Jewish Prince was delivered into the hands of the Officers of Assaradin, King of Assyria, searching for him after a Battle and defeat, they spied him in the midst of a thicket of briars, where he had painfully and cunningly hid himself, the Officers seized the King's person, and conveyed him to the Camp. Manasseh loaded with heavy chains, was from thence led away captive to Babylon, and by order of the Assyrian Prince, ignominiously cast into a Dungeon,

In this horrid and lonesome prison, humbled and sore abased, Manasseh's Eyes were first opened to all his miscarriages and impiety; before the tribunal of Conscience, his sins and high aggravations, crimes almost forgot, were here passing in serious review, and Manasseh,

in

in the bitterness and anguish of his Soul, devoutly prayed to God, and he obtained mercy, pardon and deliverance.

From the greatest sinner, he became the greatest penitent; from the bloodiest Tyrant, one of the most merciful and best of Sovereigns. God so disposed the heart of the King of Babylon, that on a treaty, Manasseh obtained his release first from the Dungeon, and not long after from his bondage. As soon as he returned to Jerusalem, he diligently and zealously set about repairing all the damages his sad impiety had occasioned, and his very first care was to clear the sanctuary and Temple of all the Idols, he had himself, most wickedly caused to be placed there, and he restored the daily Service of God, and His worship in the Temple, to its purity, its ancient usages and splendour.

Manasseh, then wrote circular letters, and sent them, throughout all his Kingdom, commanding all, and every one of his subjects, to destroy and utterly demolish every Idol, and the Altars and Groves, which he himself had, in the early part of his life, caused to be set up, and the People, with great readiness, set about executing, throughout every Province, this new edict of their Prince.

Manasseh,

Manasseh, then turned his thoughts to his Metropolis, and he repaired and strengthened its walls and fortifications, he reigned piously and in uninterrupted peace, three and thirty years after his return from Babylon, and died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and in the fifty-fifth year of his reign.

Manasseh, was buried in his Garden, at his own particular and very modest request, the miscarriages, and impiety of early life made him account himself unworthy of a place, in the royal sepulchre, among his Ancestors.

A M O N.

AT the age of twenty-two, Amon succeeded his Father Manasseh, and was proclaimed at Jerusalem, in the year of the World, three thousand, three hundred sixty-two; and six hundred forty-two years before Christ.

This young Prince could only have witnessed his Father's many virtues and piety, yet Amon inherited and lived in the daily practise of the most odious and worst of all his vices and abominations. He was an Idolater and gave himself up to impiety, and the most criminal debaucheries, but before he had reigned two years, Amon was assassinated, in his own Palace, by some of his guard, and they buried him in the same garden with his Father. King Uzziab, had formerly planted, and laid out this garden, and it was on that account called Uzza. This unfortunate young Prince, had a Son only eight years of age, and they proclaimed him, King of Judah.

At the conclusion of so very short a reign, it is astonishing to see the alteration which had taken place in Jerufalem, and the very rapid progress of immorality and impiety. The History informs us, that among the Princes and Nobles, the Judges and Magistrates, injustice, oppression, cruelty and all manner of Debauchery reigned; among the Priests pride, avarice, corruption and a shameful traffick of Religion; among the people total ignorance and irreligion. Altars were reared every where to Baal, and to the whole Host of Heavenly bodies, the Sanctuary throughout was polluted with Idols,
and

(456)

and in its sacred Courts were practised the vilest and most odious prostitutions, abominable and Heathenish Ceremonies.

The following are Princes of one family and conclude the Reigns of the Kings of Judah,

J O S I A H.

T H I S amiable and most virtuous Prince, was in the eighth year of his age, crowned in Jerusalem, and proclaimed King of Judah.

In the year of the World, three thousand, three hundred sixty-four; and six hundred and forty years before the birth of our Saviour.

At the command of God, a Prophet foretold the birth of this young Prince, and even named him by name three hundred years before. “ Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Jofiah by name.”

Immediately after his coronation, Regents were elected from the Sanhedrim, the grand council of the Nation, with whom, together with his wife and pious tutors and counsellors, this young Prince, could only, from time to time, be directed and advised, trusting to their good management, and regulation of his Government. In the fifteenth year of his age, Jofiah married, and in the sixteenth he had a Son and successor born to him. He had now assumed the reigns of Government in his own hands. With assiduous zeal, and true piety, with an intrepidity almost beyond belief, he engaged in this virtuous and most arduous enterprize ; his very wonderful expeditions, and signal successes were astonishing.

Jofiah would not trust to his officers and servants, he took an active part himself in destroying and pulling down throughout Judah and Israel, the Altars, Idols and Groves, which had been set up in both Kingdoms, and the King issued out a proclamation, forbidding all such Worship, in any place, or grove, or Temple whatsoever

exprefsly naming in this edict every high place in particular, which laft prohibition had been in vain attempted by his pious predecessors; in order more effectually to put a ſtop to this very obſtinate evil. Joſiah cauſed all ſuch places to be polluted with dead bodies, human carcaſſes and bones; every Prieſt who had offered Sacrifice and Worſhip there, he excluded from all Sacerdotal Functions and Priviledges whatever. The Idols, Altars, and all offerings dedicated to them, ſuch as Chariots, Veſſels, Horſes, and every article that could be burnt, he ſet on fire, and ſtrewed their aſhes over the graves of their Worſhippers, and all ſuch as could not be deſtroyed by fire, he cauſed to be flung into the River Kidron. From Jeruſalem Joſiah proceeded to the Mount of Olives, and demolifhed all its Altars and Idols, from thence to the Valley of Hinnon, a place notorious for the horrid cruelties exerciſed by the Worſhippers of Moloch, after this he paſſed on to Bethel, where Jero-boam had ſet up the Golden Calves, Joſiah deſtroyed both Altars and Groves, and he cauſed to be dug up the dead bodies of the Idolatrous Prieſts, and burnt their bones to aſhes with their Altars, and their Gods, literally fulfilling the prediction of the Prophet three hundred years before he was born. Joſiah made his Circuit through all the other Cities of Iſrael, for as that

Kingdom

Kingdom was now in captivity, and lay almost wholly desolate, he destroyed, and burnt every where, the Idols and Altars which he found, and when he had rooted out, from both Kingdoms, Idolatry and its abominations and ceremonies, he set about restoring the true worship of God in Jerusalem, and beginning with the Temple, Josiah renewed the daily Services, the Sacrifices, and the purity and solemnity of its worship.

This young Prince was now arrived at the age of twenty-six, and he had reigned eighteen years in Jerusalem, at this time he set about the repairs and embellishments of the Temple, and while he was thus zealously and diligently employed, Hilkiah the High-Priest sent the King word, he had that moment found the book of the Law, and Shaphan the Secretary of the Temple, was entrusted to carry it to the Palace, and lay it before the King; Josiah immediately opened the Sacred Volume (supposed to be the book wrote by Moses himself,) and when he there read, the dreadful judgments denounced therein, against those very abominations and Idolatry, he had now himself been an eye witness to, throughout all Judæa, he humbled himself before God, he rent his cloaths and wept bitterly, pathetically expressing the grief and anguish of his soul, fearing least both King, and People should suffer, and

feel the dire effects of the threatenings and denunciations announced against the transgressor, which he saw recorded in that book.

Huldah, a Prophetess, the Wife of Shallum, lived at that time in the Colledge at Jerusalem, Josiah sent to her, Hilkiab the High-Priest, a select number of his Nobles and Shaphan his Secretary, and requested her to enquire of the Lord concerning the judgments denounced against Israel and Judah, of which he had been reading in the book; and Huldah answered them, God would not fail to inflict on the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, all that fore evil and even the curses written in that book, but say ye to the King of Judah, because thy heart is tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, and rend thy clothes and weep before me, I have heard thee, and witnessed the anguish of thy soul, I will gather thee to thy Fathers in peace, and thy eyes shall not see the evil I will bring on Jerusalem and its inhabitants; after this plain and direct answer to his inquiries, Josiah assembled all the Elders, his Nobles, and Rulers of his People in the Temple, and he read himself before them, out of the book of the Law, and religiously exhorted them to the most rigid, pious, and careful observance of all its precepts and commands. The King assured them, they should always be the rule of his conduct, he was
himself

himself determined to observe them, and set his People a steady example of obedience.

The Priests and Levites were now all of them very busy, preparing to celebrate the feast of the Pass-over, and were killing the Paschal Lamb. Josiah exhorted them to purify themselves for a work so very solemn and religious, he gave to the People, from his own flock, thirty thousand Lambs and Kids and three thousand Oxen. Since the days of Samuel, the Prophet, no such religious Zeal and National Piety had ever been seen and witnessed by the People.

After the celebration of the Pass-over, Josiah began another Circuit round his Kingdom, and expelled all the Wizards, Inchanters, Juglers and such dark and magic practices from out the land. He established in his Cities, Courts of Judicature, and Seminaries for instructing all the People in the law of Moses, and he publicly, and very seriously exhorted the Priests and Levites, to employ all the day, in explaining and diligently enforcing, the pious observance on the People. Thus, with true religious zeal, King Josiah exerted himself in the reformation of his Kingdom, in restoring the pure worship of God, and abolishing Idolatry, in hopes, by his own and his Peoples Piety, he might in some measure avert the

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the sad judgments threatened, from falling on his family and Jerusalem.

This amiable, and best of Princes reigned one and thirty years in profound peace, and at that time, Pharoah Necho, King of Egypt, marched with his Army in order to invade Assyria. In hostile array, the King led them across Judæa, intending only by that road to enter Assyria. Josiah was displeased and alarmed, and the King with all his Army met the Egyptian Prince, intending a formidable opposition to his March, and Josiah encamped in the Valley of Megiddo. Pharoah Necho here sent a friendly Embassy to Josiah, expressly assuring him, he had no hostile views whatever against the King of Judah. Josiah had taken the alarm, and would not be persuaded, as he was falling out from his tent in his chariot, and riding round his own Camp, Pharoah Necho's Archers shot at King Josiah, and they wounded him, Josiah said, have me away, and his servants instantly took him out of the chariot bleeding and swooning, they put him into another chariot that he had in waiting, and hurried him from the Camp, but as soon as he had reached Jerusalem, Josiah died, in the thirty-ninth year of his age, and the thirty-first of his reign, and with this amiable and highly virtuous Prince is said to have expired, the religion, the happiness

happiness and glory of the Nation. Jeremy the Prophet composed, on this sad event, a pathetic, and at that time, a very celebrated Elegy, called the first Book of the Lamentations, a funeral Dirge, sung by a choice band, of singing men and singing women, at his burial, with the deepest sorrow and with the tenderest feelings of distress, personal and national, the Prophet is said to have described the mournful and heartfelt sorrow of all his People. This book is unfortunately lost, the second Book of the Lamentations was wrote, on the sure conviction, the Prophet then had, of the final destruction of Jerusalem.

King Josiah was magnificiently buried, in royal pomp in the of Sepulchre of David, and in such affectionate veneration was the memory of this best of Princes held, that for more than a century afterwards (esteeming this the first blow and commencement of their calamities) on all mournful occasions, seasons of sorrow and dismay, the singing men and singing women chanted this funeral Ode and afresh commemorated, the very early, and untimely death, of King Josiah.

JEHOIAHAZ.

J E H O A H A Z.

THIS Prince was the youngest Son of King Josiah, but being of an active warlike spirit, like a young Lion, the People made choice of him, blew the trumpets and proclaimed him King of Judah, in the year of the World, three thousand three hundred and ninety-six, and six hundred and eight years before Christ.

Jehoahaz had also the name of Shallum, his Mother was a Daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. This young Prince ascended the throne at the age of three and twenty, and unwisely commenced his Reign with the very early proofs of dissoluteness and impiety, ambitiously imitating the vices and idolatry of some of the worst of his predecessors.

The People, in general, were much disposed to return to their heathenish superstitions and the worship of Idols, and the King thought to gratify them by complacency and indulgence in order to acquire a popularity, and he hereby paid a compliment to Egypt, by conforming to their Idols and Ceremonious worship.

The Prophet Jeremiah was expressly sent to Jehoahaz, and with earnest warmth would fain have brought to his remembrance, the Virtues, and God-like Piety of his Father, persuasively inviting him to imitate it, and as a powerful inducement, at parting, the Prophet uttered a severe threat, and strikingly told the King, that in case he did not, in right earnest, set about a speedy reformation. God would signally punish him, he should be ignominiously led away captive, into a foreign land, and he should die there.

The reign of Jehoahaz was very short, only three months, for Pharaoh-Necho, King of Egypt, having been successful in his expedition against Assyria, as he returned back from the banks of the Euphrates, he passed through Judæa, and deposed the Jewish King. Necho first dispatched a Captain and his Guard, and summoned Jehoahaz to meet him at Riblah, where he ordered

him into confinement, and afterwards passed sentence upon him.

Jehoahaz, laden with chains of brass, disgracefully followed Pharoah-Necho into Egypt, he there added to the honours of his triumph, and was confined a State-Prisoner as long as he lived, dying in a foreign land, as the Prophet had foretold.

The King of Egypt now made the Crown of Judah tributary, and laid on it a yearly tax of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. Eliakim, the eldest Son of Josiah, Pharoah-Necho placed upon the Jewish Throne, and to show his Sovereignty as a Conqueror, he commanded him to change his name to Jehoia-kim. The Egyptian Prince then led back his victorious Troops out of Judæa.



JEHOIAKIM.

J E H O I A K I M.

THIS Prince, the eldest Son of Jofiah, was crowned at Jerufalem, in the year of the World, three thoufand, three hundred and ninety-fix ; and fix hundred and eight years before the birth of our Saviour.

The King of Egypt, as an exercife of his royal Authority, had commanded him to affume the name of Jehoiakim, and he was now at the age of five and twenty.

In order to pay the tribute exacted by Pharoah-Necho, the young Prince began his reign by levying a heavy tax throughout his Kingdom, a mode which had been dictated to him by Egypt.

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P p p 2

Jehoikim

Jehoiakim lived in the habitual practice of Idolatry himself, and the very worst vices of his Ancestors, filling Jerusalem with the innocent blood of the Prophets, and passing sentence of death on all who refused to conform to Idol worship and his impiety.

On a day, when all the People were assembled in the Temple, to celebrate the feast of Tabernacles, a solemn Jewish Festival, the Prophet Jeremiah publicly admonished and reprov'd both King and People, with warmth and earnestness seriously exhorting them to repent, and he pronounced this severe threat, should they persist in their impiety and Idolatry, God would destroy their Temple, and Jerusalem would become a curse. At this freedom and zeal of the Prophet, the Populace, and more particularly the Priests were highly enraged, and they seized Jeremiah, and carried him before the Magistrates, but the Prophet was honourably dismissed and acquitted, " This man is not worthy of death, he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord."

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Assyria, after he had glutted his revenge on the Egyptian Prince, and taken from him all that Country between the River Euphrates and the Nile, marched his victorious Army into Judæa and advanced to the
Capital

Capital, he took the City of Jerusalem and carried away Captive Jehoiakim, and the large and valuable gold vessels, the richest ornaments of the Temple. The King remained long a State-Prisoner in Babylon, but at length the haughty Monarch condescended to accept a large yearly tribute, and restored the Crown and Kingdom to Jehoiakim.

The History informs us, banishment and imprisonment, wrought no happy change in the disposition of this very weak and most abandoned Prince, immediately on his return to Jerusalem, he resumed all his former vicious habits, his dissoluteness and impiety, although they had been the sad sources, of all his former sufferings and Captivity; Jeremiah the Prophet was again sent to admonish him, and very strikingly told him, that since he was deaf to reproof, and threatenings and warnings were of no avail, the King of Babylon would return with his Army against Judah, again besiege Jerusalem, and carry away both King and People, they should be all led Captive to Babylon, and remain in bondage seventy years, after which they should be no more a Monarchy, their lands should be desolate.

During three years, Jehoiakim continued regularly to pay his tribute, and acknowledge
his

his subjection to Babylon, at that time he grew remiss, and three whole years had passed, wherein he had paid none, upon which, a war commenced between the two Nations, and during these hostilities, Jeremiah was commanded to write down, on a roll of parchment, all his prophecies and threatenings concerning Judah, and to cause them to be read publickly, before all the People who were assembled on a high and solemn festival, then kept in the Temple; that the People seeing and hearing the many judgments denounced by God against them, might repent and be forgiven. The Prophet was at that time shut up in Prison, but he directed Baruc, his Scribe, to write down from his mouth, the tenor and very words of the threatenings he had foretold, and audibly to read them before all the assembly; the scrole was first read in the High-Priest's apartment, then again in the Secretaries Office, in presence of the Nobles and Princes; Baruc was commanded to withdraw until the King's pleasure should be known respecting the scrole. Jehoiakim ordered it to be brought to the Palace, and while they were reading, the King grew warm and angry at the denunciations and judgments threatened him; he hastily snatched the scrole out of his hand, cut it to pieces, and threw it into the fire.

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The Prophet was ordered again to write down the words of the same Judgments and threats, with this addition, that Jehoiakim should have none to sit upon the Throne of David, the dead body of Jehoiakim should be cast out, in the day-time be exposed to the heat, in the night to the frost, and that God would assuredly bring upon Judah all the evils denounced against them.

It was soon after the finishing of this second scrole, Nebuchadnezzar having conquered Egypt, marched an Army of Syrians, Chaldeans, Ammonites and Moabites into Judæa, to enforce his authority and punish their revolt, under the banner of so puissant and victorious a Monarch, these Nations all in subjection and his tributaries readily enlisted, ravaging and laying waste the whole Kingdom, and they led away captive a vast number of Jews, murdered their Prince and dragged his dead carcase ignominiously through the City and beyond its gates, and there left it unburied, according to the prediction of the Prophet Jeremiah.

Jehoiakim had reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

JEHOICHIN

J E H O I A C H I N.

THIS young Prince, Son of Jehoiakim, is also called by the name of Jeconiah, he^a was eighteen years of age, when he ascended the Throne of Judah, in the year of the World, three thousand four hundred and seven; and five hundred and ninety-seven years before Christ.

At a very early period, Jehoiachin was distinguished for his impiety, and he began his reign with the most abandoned vices of his Ancestors, short indeed was his trial and career, but wicked and base he practised, during that short time, all the abominations of his Father.

At the end of three months, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, marched a formidable Army into Judæa, and approached Jerusalem. In the

most humble and submissive manner, by the advice of the Prophet Jeremiah, the young Prince with his Wives and his Mother, his Nobles and the Officers of his Court, came out in a body, surrendered themselves up, paid him homage as his vassals, and sued for mercy. Nebuchadnezzar was inexorable, the Jewish King, his Wives, his Mother, his whole Court were made Prisoners, and afterwards led away Captives to Babylon.

The Temple, Palaces, Treasury and City, were all plundered of every valuable, and Nebuchadnezzar carried off seven thousand valiant Soldiers distinguished for their bravery, and one thousand craftsmen and smiths, among the Captives, Ezekiel the Prophet, and Mordecai Uncle to Queen Esther, were now led away to bondage.

Before he left Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar placed Mattaniah, Josiah's third Son, and Uncle to Jehoiachin, on the Jewish Throne, upon his taking the oath of allegiance and fidelity, but he first selected out his hostages, and settled the yearly tribute to Babylon.

Mattaniah was commanded, to take upon him, the name of Zedekiah. The Conquerors of the East imposed a name, as a token of subjection,

on Princes they had honoured with their patronage.

The Seventy years Captivity of the Jews in Babylon, is dated from this period.

Jehoiachin, and his Mother, both of them died in Babylon, but the King had been seven and thirty years a State Prisoner; in the last year of his life, soon after Evil-Merodach came to the Crown, and succeeded Nebuchadnezzar his Father, this Prince sent to the Prison, and admitted the Jewish King to an apartment in the Palace, ordered the Ensign's of Royalty to be restored him, appointed him a table, and an allowance to all his family.



ZEDEKIAH.

Z E D E K I A H.

AT the age of twenty-one, the youngest Son of King Josiah, and Uncle to Jehoiachin, was crowned at Jerusalem, King of Judah, and he assumed the name of Zedekiah.

In the year of the World, three thousand four hundred and seven; and five hundred and ninety-seven years before the birth of our Saviour.

The reign of this young Prince, was not remarkable for its impiety, but it was signally distinguished by many distresses almost too painful to relate, family, personal, and national.

Zedekiah, for some years, regularly paid his yearly tribute to Babylon. His neighbours the Ammonites, Moab, Edom, Tyre and Sidon

were at this time, all under subjection, and tributary to Nebuchadnezzar, the Assyrian Monarch, now at the height of all his glory. Each of these states, and Kingdoms, had forwarded Ambassadors to Jerusalem congratulating Zedekiah on his accession and settlement on the Throne of Judah, but they every one of them, at the same time, secretly proposed to him, a union with them, in a confederacy and revolt, all of them were eager and ambitious to shake off a dependance so burthensome and disgraceful.

Their proposals were highly flattering and pleasing to this young Prince, and he eagerly listened to them, but the Prophet Jeremiah, was well aware of their fallacy and danger, and he previously sent to the several Ambassadors a chain and a yoke, desiring them, to carry them home, each one to his own Court. The Prophet not contenting himself with so striking an emblem and reproof, in the name of God, gravely and with earnest warmth reasoned with them, recommending a patient submission, lest a much heavier yoke should be laid upon them all.

Zedekiah, deceived by his Council and Nobles, listened to his flatterers, and he took encouragement from the predictions of his false Prophets, unwittingly expecting the blessings they foretold

foretold. Nothing was heard, but one perpetual cry of victory and deliverance from morning until night. The Prophet Jeremy, with zeal and great concern, strenuously contradicted them. He expressly foretold the impending ruin of the City, and desolation of the Country, and kept writing many letters himself to his friends and acquaintance already Captives in Babylon, whenever messengers were sent thither with the yearly tribute money, desiring they would not flatter themselves with the expectation of liberty or deliverance before seventy years were expired. These suffering Captives, distressed at what the Prophet told them, and in sad despondency, wrote back angry letters to Jerusalem, praying to have Jeremiah apprehended, and punished, for uttering (as they supposed) the dictates of the King of Babylon, and not those of the God of Israel. Jeremiah's enemies, and mistaken friends at length prevailed, the Prophet was apprehended and cast into Prison. The false Prophets, whose favourable predictions had so flattered and infatuated Zedekiah, all exulted and rejoiced, at this event, and now acquiring more influence, they persuaded the King to shake off the Babylonish yoke, but the enterprize and very rash attempt hastened on the destruction of the Temple, the City, and the Empire.

As soon as Nebuchadnezzar heard of Zedekiah's revolt, and that he had broke his oath of Fidelity, he began building Forts at convenient distances, and garrisoned them, in order to prevent provision, and all supplies whatever being brought to Jerusalem, and in the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, the Assyrian Monarch marched a formidable Army into Judaea and laid siege to the Capital, the King had neither time nor even the power of contriving and providing for his own safety or his Peoples, humbled and sore alarmed, Zedekiah now saw his error, but it was too late; the King applied in right earnest to the Prophet, and sent for him out of prison, Jeremiah expressly told him, both City and Temple would be utterly destroyed, the King himself, his Nobles and all his Subjects would be carried away Captive to Babylon.

At this time Pharoah-Hophra, King of Egypt, headed a powerful Army and brought them against the besiegers, Nebuchadnezzar boldly led his Army back and met the Egyptians, a bloody battle was fought, and a complete victory obtained by Assyria. Nebuchadnezzar, with his highly spirited Troops, in the hour of triumph, returned before Jerusalem and vigorously renewed the attack,

Zedekiah,

Zedekiah, had been earnestly imploring the prayers and intercession of the Prophet, during the absence of the Enemy, in behalf of himself and his People, but the only answer he could obtain was, the Chaldees would certainly return, Pharaoh-Hophra, and the Egyptians, would all be driven back, Judah would be left to the mercy of the King of Babylon.

The City had held out two years and a half, at which time the People were almost starved. By the battering rams and the vigorous efforts of the Chaldees, a breach in the wall was now made, and the Enemy kept pouring into the City in great numbers; while all this was taking place in one part, many of the soldiery and inhabitants fled, by way of a gate leading to the King's garden, and escaped to the plains. Jeremiah strenuously urged the King to surrender himself, but he was all despair, and determined to attempt to fly away, and if possible elude the Enemy. For this purpose he stole out, at dead of night, with a few Nobles and only his Body-Guard; the Chaldeans ever on the watch, soon spied him out, and dispatched a party which overtook him. Zedekiah, his Nobles and Guard, were all made Prisoners, and led to the Assyrian Camp, from thence they were carried to Riblah, and ushered into the Royal Presence. Nebuchadnezzar

had

had here fixed his head-quarters, a convenient situation, from whence he could watch his own territories, and supply his Army with fresh recruits and provision.

The Assyrian Tyrant, savage and furious, here glutted his revenge most barbarously, he summoned a council, brought on the trial of Zedekiah, convicted him of treachery and rebellion, and instantly passed sentence. Zedekiah's children were now, one by one, led into Court and butchered before his face, immediately after, the Father's eyes were both struck out, indelibly to fix for ever on his mind, the last sad sight of all his life. This bloody, and most horrid deed, fell out in the eleventh year of his Reign, Zedekiah now blind and laden with heavy chains of brass, was ignominiously led away to Babylon, to grace the triumph of the Babylonish Monarch, after which he ended his days there, a State-Prisoner, and in a dungeon. Thus Nebuchadnezzar found the means of reconciling the predictions of two Prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, both of them foretold Zedekiah's captivity and death in Babylon, this Prince was carried to Babylon and he died there, but he never saw the City, and Jeremiah had prophesied he never should.

After

After a close siege, of more than two years, a numerous and powerful Army without, Famine and Pestilence within, the Chaldees took Jerusalem by storm on the twenty-seventh day of July, in the year of the World, three thousand four hundred and eighteen. They plundered the Temple and the royal Palaces, the Treasury, Publick buildings, and houses of the Nobles, seizing all the valuables, costly furniture, and the richest spoils. All the Gold, Silver, and Portables, with what were left of the utensils and magnificent Vessels (which they cut off from their stands) and now they pulled down the brass Pillars and sea of brass (so immense, they were said to be, without weight) and they stript them all off from the Temple and sent them to Babylon; the Chaldean Army, practised the most wanton cruelty, ravaging and destroying all they could not carry away.

Some months after, Nebuzar-adon a Chaldee General, by orders from his Court, set fire to the whole City, and to this superb and most magnificent structure the Temple, after it had stood four hundred and fifty years, the Ornament and glory of the world. Having effected this total destruction of the City they demolished the Walls, Towers, Fortresses and Fortifications,

and the inhabitants as many as yet survived, were all driven away captives to Babylon.

Foreseeing this sad event, in the spirit of Prophecy, Jeremiah pathetically foretold this mournful journey of the Israelites leading away to Babylon.

“ A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation
“ and bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her
“ children and refusing to be comforted.” Rachel, Jacobs beloved Wife, was buried between Ramah and Bethlehem, and the Israelites passed by her tomb, in their way from Jerusalem to Babylon. The Prophet poetically calls her from the Mansions of the dead, (the afflicted Mother of both Tribes) to bewail the dire and sad catastrophe—Sons, and Daughters, led away to bondage.

The advantageous situation of Jerusalem, on a high eminence, the amazing strength and height of its walls and bulwarks, the valour and martial prowess of its warlike inhabitants had long protracted the siege. Nebuchadnezzar began with blocking it up with lines of circumvallation, and contravallation, to prevent all access of provision and supplies, intending to starve them and compel them to surrender, and he was hereby
avoiding

avoiding all sallies from the besieged, which might annoy his Army; but in high spirits, after his victory over Pharoah-Hophra, immediately on his return, he erected Towers, from the top of which, he could assault the Guards posted on the walls. The besieged, on their part, raised opposite edifices, by way of defence from the battering rams and other engines of the Enemy. Nebuchadnezzar vigorously employed every warlike art, and manœuvre, to open a breach for his brave soldiers, his horses and chariots to enter, at last his efforts proved successful, and he took by storm, this almost impregnable Fortress and strong Hold of Zion, this glorious and once so highly favoured Jerusalem.

Thus most unhappily ended the Jewish Monarchy, after it had stood four hundred and eighty-eight years from the accession of David, and three hundred and eighty-eight years from the revolt of the ten Tribes and subsequent division of the Empire, and one hundred and thirty four years after the Israelitish commonwealth, consisting of the ten revolting Tribes, had ended in their dispersion and captivity.

To this period the Kingdom of Judáh had descended uninterruptedly in the line of David.

ESSAY XV.

COMMENCING THE REIGNS

OF THE

KINGS OF ISRAEL.

J E R O B O A M.

NADAB. { ZIMRI.

BAASHA. { OMRI.

ELAH. { AHAB.

JEROBOAM.

J E R O B O A M.

IN the year of the World, three thousand twenty-seven; and nine hundred seventy-seven years before the birth of our Saviour, Jeroboam Son of Nebat, an intrepid, and highly spirited Youth of the tribe of Ephraim, acquired a popularity, and was elected by the voice of the people, King over Israel.

At the appointment of Solomon, Jeroboam had been employed as Over-seer over his own Tribe, and over the tribe of Manasseh. Ahijah the Prophet had revealed to him, that on the death of the reigning Monarch, ten of the twelve Tribes would be rent from his Successor, and that he himself was the person God had appointed to reign over them.

It

3027. In the Reign of Rehoboam King of Judah.

It was very usual for the Prophets to exemplify their Messages by action, Ahijah the Skilonite met Jeroboam, as they two were crossing a field alone, the young Officer was clad in a new garment, and Ahijah caught hold of the coat and rent it in twelve pieces, and he said to Jeroboam, take ye ten pieces, for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, behold I will rend the Kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee.

On such intelligence Jeroboam's ambition instantly took fire, he grew thoughtful and elated with his new expectations and dignity.

Whether Solomon suspected his disloyalty or had been informed of the Prophecy, Jeroboam thought it prudent to retire into Egypt to avoid all suspicion, and the displeasure and resentment of the King, but immediately upon the death of Solomon, Jeroboam returned to be in readiness, and watch the first favourable opportunity of gratifying an ambition, the Prophet Ahijah had so wonderfully excited.

The haughty vanity and thoughtless weakness of Rehoboam (Solomon's Son) gave him a very speedy and successful one.

A Faction

A Faction was suddenly formed and headed by Jeroboam, a petition from the People carried up by him for a redress of their grievances, was imprudently and with haughty insolence rejected, a revolt instantly ensued — Rehoboam escaped for his life, flew away, mounted his chariot, and drove full speed to his Capital for safety, Adoram, his officer of revenue, the venerable old Steward both of David and Solomon was murdered on the spot, and now ten of the twelve Tribes with spirit and intrepidity cried out aloud, “ To your Tents ! To your Tents ! O’ “ Israel.” Sounding instantly the trumpets they proclaimed Jeroboam King over Israel.

The first thoughts of this young Monarch were very naturally and assiduously employed in arranging and establishing his new-gotten Kingdom ; the better to defend and secure it, he repaired to the boundaries and frontiers, fortified them, built barracks and stationed a guard ; he next rebuilt and fortified Sechem and Penuel, making them royal Cities, the former he made his place of residence, where he settled his household, and always kept his Court.

What perplexed Jeroboam, most of all was, that the Israelites of every Tribe, had made it a constant rule to go up publicly to worship God,
in

in the Temple at Jerusalem, three times every year. The King was fearful lest at these seasons seeing the splendour of the City, the Temple and the Priests, his subjects might avail themselves of the opportunity, and reconcile their differences with their Brethren. Jeroboam impiously and ungratefully resolved to sacrifice religion, to his false ideas of safety, and he caused to be made two molten images in the figure of golden calves, such as he had seen worshipped in Egypt, and he said, " Behold thy Gods O Israel." Jeroboam caused them to be set up, at the two extremities of his Kingdom, the the Northern and the Southern, the one at Dan, and the other at Bethel, and he issued out a proclamation commanding all his People to worship God at Dan and Bethel, and prohibited them, henceforward, under a severe penalty, even going up to worship at Jerusalem.

From this fatal error arose all the misfortunes of this Prince's Reign, and Israel's woe and distresses—God had graciously given him a Kingdom, and directed him to a line of virtue and duty, annexing a promise of protection and favour to the observance and performance of it—Jeroboam had witnessed Idol worship in Egypt, and he chose to prefer his own weak policy, and foolish

Foolish imaginations, to a grateful dependence on God, and a reliance on his promises.

To wean his People more effectually from their usual mode and customs, Jeroboam set about building new Temples for Worship and Altars on all the high places; and he (in conformity to the feasts in Judah) on the fifteenth day of the month, assembled all Israel proclaiming a high festival, a ceremonious and solemn dedication of these new Gods, their Temples, and their Altars.

A Prophet was expressly sent on this occasion, and he denounced a heavy Judgment on both Idols and Temples and their Altars, by a subsequent King of Judah, whom he now prophesied of by name, three hundred years before his birth; and the stronger to impress on their minds, his remonstrance and highly awful prediction, and assure them of the truth of his prophecy, the Prophet performed a signal miracle before all the People who were now met for publick worship. The Prophet placed himself by the side of the Altar, and he bade the People listen to a loud crack in the substance of it, and they would see the cinders run out at the rent; Jeroboam (in a Priestly habit pompously arrayed on this occasion) stood near the Altar, intending himself to

offer up incense upon it—enraged at the freedom of the Prophet, and at the interruption to the service, he stretched out his hand to have him apprehended—crying out—Lay hold on him! the King's hand and arm withered and dried up in an instant, so that he had no power to pull it back.

Jeroboam sensible of his impiety, astonished and alarmed, he submissively implored the assistance of the Prophet, "God hath manifested himself to be thy God and friend, he will hear thy prayers though He will not regard mine," and the Prophet to convince Jeroboam, he wished his reformation, and not his ruin, earnestly prayed to God, and the hand and arm were restored to him again.

The Altar was violently rent, the ashes kept pouring out, and the Prophet said, "O Altar! Altar! a child of the house of David, Josiah by name, behold he shall offer the Priests of the high places, even them that burn incense on thee, and mens bones shall be burnt upon thee. Jeroboam (though he could forget the author of his mercy, yet he would ambitiously have honoured the instrument) and he invited the Prophet home with him to dinner, and would fain have rewarded him for his cure, but the Prophet said to the King, if thou wouldest give me half thy house,
yet

yet will I not go in with thee, neither will I drink water, or eat bread in this place, for so the Lord commanded me, and forbad me even to return by the same way that I came, and be again a witness of such impiety and abominations.

This very extraordinary warning, so awfully impressed, wrought no change whatever on the conduct of Jeroboam, he practised the same breach of duty, continued his Idolatrous worship, issued out fresh orders commanding all Israel to repair to Dan and Bethel, and there worship God, whom he had idolatrously represented under the similitude of a golden calf, and in each of these Cities had impiously set up.

Some time after this, the young Prince Jeroboam's eldest Son was sick, his Father in deep distress, privately sent his wife in disguise to Ahijah the Prophet, who dwelt at Shiloh, behold; (says he) it was he, that told me, I should be King over Israel, take with thee ten loaves, cracknels, and a cruse of honey, (a suitable present for a person in low life) and he shalt tell thee what shall become of my child. The Prophet was quite blind, and now grown very old, he was informed of her coming, and of her disguise, immediately the Prophet knew the Queen, and he said, as she entered the door, come in thou

wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thyself to be another? I have heavy tidings to tell thee : Go tell Jeroboam thus saith the Lord, I exalted thee, and made thee Prince over Israel : I rent the Kingdom from the house of David, and gave it to thee : But thou hast done evil, made thee other Gods even molten images, and cast me behind thy back : Behold I will bring evil on the house of Jeroboam, him that dieth of Jeroboam in the City, shall the dogs eat, and him that dieth in the field, shall the fowls of the air eat, all shall lie unburied, and his posterity be utterly cast off, The Queen went sorrowfully home, and when she came to the threshold of the Palace, Abijam the young Prince her Son died, and orders for a general mourning were instantly issued out.

The History informs us, that neither the death of this amiable youth (so kindly taken from amidst the calamities of his Country) nor the awful message sent by the Prophet foretelling the sad destruction of himself, and his whole Family, had any effect in reclaiming this idolatrous, very obstinate, and most abandoned Prince.

Rehoboam, King of Judah, was now dead, and Abijam his Son, had ascended the throne of his Father. He was a spirited young Prince,
fond

fond of glory and martial honours, at the head of a powerful Army he marched to Mount Zemo-
 raim, and encamped on the borders of Ephraim;
 Jeroboam advanced with a much more numerous
 Army, and he here met his rival. The youthful
 monarch, in an animated speech accosted the
 Troops of Jeroboam, and upbraided them for a
 separation and revolt so unnatural and unbrother-
 ly. Jeroboam an experienced officer, availed
 himself of the moment, and of what the young
 Prince was about, he filed off one body of men
 after another, placing them all round the hill,
 and commanded them to fall fiercely on Abijam's
 Army in the rear, and he himself would, at the
 same time attack him in front. Notwithstanding
 this highly artful and spirited piece of General-
 ship, Abijam ordered the trumpets to sound, a
 general shout throughout all the Army and they
 gallantly fought their way through all the Troops
 of Israel, and so immense was the slaughter, they
 put to the sword five hundred thousand Israelites.
 Abijam pursued his victory, took the City of
 Bethel, and so harassed and weakened Jeroboam,
 he never had afterwards courage, or power to
 oppose Abijam.

Jeroboam did not very long survive his dis-
 grace, after a reign of two and twenty years he
 died and was succeeded by his Son.

NADAB,

N A D A B.

THIS young Prince Son of Jeroboam was proclaimed King of Israel, in the year of the World, three thousand and forty-nine; and nine hundred and fifty-six years before Christ, and in the second year of the reign of Afa King of Judah.

Nadab was an Jdolatrous Prince and inherited all the vices of his Father. His reign was only between one and two years, Nadab was then murdered at the siege of Gibbethon (a fortress belonging to the Philistines) by Baasha of the tribe of Issachar.

Baasha seized upon the Crown and Kingdom, and the very first Act of his authority was, to put to death all the race and kindred of Jeroboam, and thus the Prediction of the Prophet Ahijah was literally fulfilled.

B A A S H A.

THIS Prince usurped the Crown of Israel in the year of the World, three thousand and fifty, and nine hundred and fifty-four years before Christ ; and in the third year of Afa King of Judah.

Baasha was the Son of Ahijah of the tribe of Issachar. An Idolatrous, and wicked Prince and he maintained an almost uninterrupted war with the Kingdom of Judah.

Baasha witnessed with an envious eye, Afa's high prosperity and honours, and in order to watch him and seize every advantage over Judah, Baasha took Ramah and very busily employed himself in building Towers and Fortifications. Afa was at that time sick, and in his first alarm, he

3050. Afa King of Judah.

sent

sent an Embassy and very valuable gifts, even all the gold and silver in his Treasury, to Benhadad, King of Syria. There was a league, a national alliance then subsisting between the Kingdoms of Syria and Israel; but Benhadad accepted notwithstanding the King of Judah's present, and forwarded an Army from Damascus, to the northern part of the Kingdom of Israel and seized upon the Town of Ijon, and two Cities in Naphthali, and some others which lay nearest to his Capital, and were most remote from Ramah, where Baasha was erecting his fortifications. Baasha was therefore under the necessity of leaving off, in order to come and defend his own Kingdom, and drive out the Syrians.

In the latter end of the reign of Baasha, Jehu, a Son of the Prophet Hanani, was sent to him, and God commanded him to tell Baasha, that as he had chose to imitate the vices and impiety of his predecessors, he should also partake of their punishment. " For as much as I exalted thee
 " out of the dust, and made thee Prince over my
 " People, and thou chusest to walk in the way
 " of Jeroboam; behold I will take away the posterity of Baasha, him that dieth of Baasha in
 " the City, dogs shall eat, and him that dieth of
 " his in the fields, the fowls of the air." Thus ingloriously should Baasha and all his Family be

cut off from Israel. It was soon after this visit of Jehu, and the delivery of his very awful message, that Baasha died, but he had reigned over Israel four and twenty years.

Baasha was succeeded in his Kingdom, by his Son Elah.

E L A H.

THIS young Prince ascended the Throne of Israel in the year of the World, three thousand and seventy-two; and nine hundred and thirty two years before the birth of our Saviour, in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Afa King of Judah.

Elah a debauched and idolatrous youth, very soon experienced the sad prediction of Jehu, the

Son of Hanani, verified; for he was only in the second year of his reign, when Zimri one of his own Generals, who commanded over his Chariots during the siege at Gibbethon, a fortress of the Philistines, assassinated Elah, as he was sitting in the tent of the high steward of his household, feasting and carousing with his Nobles at a time that his Army were all in martial exercise and reviewing in the field.

Zimri seized the Crown of Israel, and he put to death all the whole family of Baasha, even his most distant Relations, and all his Confidants and familiar acquaintance, every one he thought likely to oppose his settlement on the throne, or avenge the quarrel or the death of their friends.



Z I M R I.

THIS Prince was proclaimed in Sechem King of Israel in the year of the World, three thousand seventy-three ; and nine hundred and thirty-one years before Christ.

The Reign of Zimri lasted only seven days, at which time Omri another general Officer had influence enough to get himself elected to the Government.



8073.

T t t 2

OMRI.

M R I.

OMR I a general Officer was now proclaimed and the better to secure and establish himself in his Kingdom, he instantly gave orders for raising the siege of Gibbethon, and marched at the head of his Troops against Zimri, who had shut himself up in the Palace at Tirzah, but before Omri or any of his men could procure entrance at the City Gates, Zimri in his royal Palace set fire to the whole building, and he burnt himself, and the Treasury and every thing in it to the ground. Thus resolute and passionate, full of anguish and despair, Zimri finished his very short reign of seven days and his life.

A Civil War distracted the Kingdom several years after Omri had assumed the Government, and the People attempted to place Tibni the Son of Ginath on the throne of Israel, Omri's party at length prevailed, and his Competitor was taken off.

This

This Prince was impious, and most abandoned he is said to have outdone all his predecessors, in wickedness and idolatry.

By Zimri's mad and horrid suicide, to prevent falling into the hands of his adversary, the Palace of Tirzah was totally burnt to the ground, Omri purchased of Shemer a hill called Samaria, for two talents of silver (seven hundred pounds) and he employed himself very busily during the first six years of his reign, in building a City upon it—Ever afterwards Omri made it the Capital of his Kingdom. All we read more of this Prince is, that he reigned six years after in Samaria with all the impiety, the heathenish ceremonies, and abominations of his predecessors. At the end of a reign of twelve years, Omri died, and was succeeded by Ahab his Son. It was prophesied of Israel, she should be as a reed shaken in the water, and it is observable that no less than seven Kings reigned in Israel during the single reign of Aha King of Judah.



AHAB.

A H A B.

NINE hundred and twenty years before the birth of Christ; and in the year of the World, three thousand and eighty-four, Ahab, Son of Omri, was crowned in Samaria King of Israel. In the thirty-eighth year of the Reign of Asa King of Judah.

This very impious, and most Idolatrous Prince, was almost all his reign harassed by war, and his Kingdom sorely distressed by a long continued, and very severe famine; the fatal consequences and sad reward of his impiety.

After Ahab is represented by his Historian, as obstinately persisting in all the abominations of Jeroboam, he pertinently asks this question, was idolatry and baseness like his a light thing that therefore he needed to add to his impiety more

abominations still? But Ahab most perversely did, for contrary to the express commands of God, he took to Wife Jezebel a heathen Princess Daughter of Ethbaal, King of Sidon, a woman most infamous for her idolatry, cruelty and sorcery. The union proved an uninterrupted source of distraction and bloodshed. The Queen introduced the worship of the Gods of Sidon among the Israelites, and she set up their Idols in Samaria, even human sacrifices were offered up and witchcraft and the most abominable ceremonies publicly practised. Of all Israel only seven thousand remained who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Against God's especial prohibition, in open defiance of his laws, Ahab built a Temple to Baal, and reared up an Altar for sacrifice, and he made a grove and placed idols therein, even devils for his Peoples worship.

In cold blood Ahab and his murderous Queen butchered both Prophets and People, whosoever dared oppose the worship, and refused to bow down before the Gods of Sidon.

The land being mountainous, and long suffering for want of the former and the latter rain, to prepare the earth for tillage, and bring the fruits to maturity, it at length became quite barren, and a wasting famine ensued and had already

already lasted three years, when the Prophet
 Elijah was sent and shewed himself to Obadiah,
 the Governor of the King's household. Obadiah
 was diligently employed himself, in searching
 every where for fresh springs to water the little
 cattle which yet remained alive, and Ahab hav-
 ing no one he could trust, was walking out ano-
 ther way, on the self-same errand, they were
 thus as it were dividing the land between them,
 peradventure (says the King) we may find enough
 for the horses and mules, that we loose not all
 the beasts. Obadiah was a pious good man,
 and at the hazard of his life, had hid in caves no
 less than a hundred young Prophets, concealing
 them from the furious bigotry of the Queen,
 and he fed them with bread and water every day
 himself during the whole time of the famine.
 Upon seeing the Prophet Elijah, in order to shew
 his great respect and love to him, Obadiah fell
 on his face, and respectfully asked him, art thou
 not my Lord Elijah? and the Prophet answered,
 I am, go tell thy Lord, Elijah is here. Obadiah
 modestly hesitated, fearing lest the Prophet should
 be insulted and rudely treated by his haughty
 master, Elijah was resolute, as the Lord of Hosts
 liveth, I will surely shew myself to him to day,
 under his protection I durst, and will venture to
 come into the presence of Ahab. After telling
 him of the King's angry inquiries, Obadiah
 went

went out to seek Ahab, and when Ahab saw Elijah, he insolently asked, art thou he that troubleth Israel? and the Prophet answered, (acting in the name of God) thou and thy house art the cause, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of God and followed Baalim.

To convince the King, and with a view to reclaim him, Elijah proposed a fair method, and now follows the awful highly instructive trial of skill between the Prophet and the Priests of Baal, and all Israel were assembled as Judges upon Mount Carmel.

Elijah addresses the People in a wise and zealous speech, how long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him, but if Baal then follow him, a dead silence ensued, the People knew the drought and famine was a judgment from God, and that Baal could not remove it, though staggering in their opinion about Baal they dared not disown him in the presence of their Sovereign.

Elijah commanded the Priests of Baal, to chose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under it; they were then to call on their Gods. After which he would slay another bullock, and lay it on an Altar, and put no fire under it, and the God that answered by fire, He was the true God To this mode of trial the People all agreed.

Elijah directed the Priests of Baal to flay their ox first, and place it over the wood upon the grand Altar. The Prophets of Baal and his Priests most earnestly prayed and implored, they bowed and knelt and vowed, exerting all in vain, every art, enchantment and divination, no sacred fire blazed around their sacrifice, all fervent zeal from morning until noon, and then they cut and flashed themselves with knives and lances (their bloody mode of worship) Elijah, placid and at ease, with the wittiest pleasantry attempts to rectify their notions and false ideas of a God, Baal illustrious in their eyes, a great personage of uncontrollable power, the Prophet by contrasting his limited sphere, with the exalted ideas of Omniscience and Omnipotence, represents Baal an image impotent and ridiculous; he is surely a great God, and will not hear, he is busy, perhaps talking, or pursuing, on a journey, or asleep. Elijah's own process and trial is next related, his Altar raised, the ox laid across it, and the wood underneath, a fire from Heaven alighted instantly on the Altar blazing and consuming the sacrifice.

All Israel fell prostrate on the ground, reverentially worshipping the ONE only living and true God.

Of

Of such devout homage Elijah instantly availed himself, and he commanded them to put to death all the Idolatrous Priests of Baal, (no less than four hundred and fifty) and the People inspired by the Prophet, drove them to the Brook Kishon and they were all drowned or slain.

Ahab was sorely mortified, but he stood by, and silently permitted it.

After this Elijah walked up composedly to the King, go home (says he) to dinner, God will shortly send you rain, seeing afterwards Ahab's delay, he sent him by his servant a hurrying message, haste—haste home—you will be wet! the King had only time to mount his chariot and enter his Palace before a sudden tempest poured down rapidly, Elijah respectfully ran before the chariot, and entered the City Jezreel, but to avoid the angry Queen, he would not go near the Palace, Elijah left Samaria, and fled away for his life.

The King related all that had happened at Carmel, told the Queen of his disgrace, and of his sufferings, and (says he) the shame was open and publick, even before all my People. Furious and Frantic on hearing of the death of all her domestic Chaplains and her Priests, inspired with no respect for the Prophet's person, or his venerable character, nor for the signal services he had just done the Country, nor for his God, the

U u u 2

Queen,

Queen vowed she would murder Elijah, and before to-morrow's dawn.

Ahab had thus attempted his own vindication, giving her all the satisfaction in his power, although the event had so passionately inflamed this very Furious and angry Queen. Thus ended the long continued drought and fore famine in Samaria.

This Prince had reigned eighteen years over Israel when Benhadad, King of Syria, entered Samaria with a formidable Army, and laid close siege to his Capital; two and thirty crowned Heads with amazing Forces, Horse-men and chariots enlisted in this expedition under the Syrian banner against Israel. Benhadad, glorying in his strength, sent an insulting Embassy to Ahab, "Thy Silver and thy gold is mine, thy wives, the goodliest are mine, and thy children." On these terms, acceptest thou peace?

Ahab terrified almost to despair, answered him, my Lord O King! I am thine, even all that I have, thy vassals and tributary, myself, wives, children and estates, I hold them by thy favour and with suitable acknowledgments. Benhadad retracted his offers, and with this haughty threat sent back his messengers, to-morrow my servants shall search thy house, and the houses of thy Nobles, I expect not only thy treasures, I will have theirs also, my servants shall have liberty to bring

bring away all they desire, on these conditions grant I thee peace.

These last demands obliged Ahab to call a council of all his Nobles and Elders, surely, (says the King) Syria is determined to destroy us, the unanimous advice of his Council was by no means to comply, hearken not to him, nor consent. Ahab sent word back, tell my Lord the King, to his first offers I agree, but to his last proposals my People will not suffer my assent. Benhadad replied, with so powerful and numerous an Army will I make my assault, every soldier shall not have a handful of Samaria to carry off.

Ahab had a little time to recover his dignity and composure, he told Benhadad, " Let not him, who girdeth on his harness, boast as him, that putteth it off, do not triumph before victory, events of war are uncertain." Benhadad was carousing with his Royal Allies in his State Pavilion, and hearing the message, he commanded his officers instantly to prepare and make the assault.

It was just at this time a Prophet was sent to Ahab with the highly welcome tidings, thus saith the Lord, hast thou seen this multitude? behold I will this day deliver it into thy hands. Ahab encouraged, grew inquisitive, asked how
he

he should proceed, and he was answered by the Prophet. The King pursued the directions given him, he and his young men and his Army sallied out at mid-day, while Benhadad was drinking himself drunk in his Pavillion, he and his two and thirty Kings, Benhadad cried out—fight—fight—whether they come out for peace or war take them alive; but Ahab, and the young men, and about seven thousand which followed slew every one his man, the Syrians all fled, and Israel pursued, Benhadad himself mounted a horse, and fled away full speed with the Horsemen.

Thus Ahab fought against Syria, immensely great and bloody was the slaughter.

The Prophet paid another visit to the Palace, and desired Ahab to consider what was fit and proper to be done by way of defence and security, next year about the same season the Syrian Army would return and invade Samaria.

Benhadad as the Prophet had foretold numbered his men of war, and marched them up to Aphek, a City in the tribe of Asher.

All Israel here gathered together to oppose them, sorely unwilling to be again blocked up in Samaria. Ahab formed his little Army into two divisions,

divisions, and they seemed like two little flocks of kids, but the Syrians filled all the Plain. Ahab was here again inspired by the Prophet, and he assured him, all the huge multitude, he saw, would be delivered into his hands; the Armies of Israel and Syria, faced one another, day after day, for seven days, on the seventh the battle was furiously fought, and one hundred thousand Syrians slain on the spot, the rest were put to flight, and they ran to the City of Aphek, where the walls fell down and crushed no less than seven and twenty thousand that were left. Benhadad sought a refuge for himself in Aphek, and hid himself in an inner-chamber; a few of his Nobles here held a conference with the King, we have heard (say they) the Kings of Israel are merciful Kings, as a testimony of our sorrow let us put sack-cloth on our loins, and ropes on our necks, having forfeited our lives, let us sue for mercy, so they clad themselves in sack-cloth, and with ropes round their necks submissively came to the Israelitish Camp, and requested an audience of Ahab.

“Thy servant Benhadad, I pray thee let me live.”

Ahab with magnanimity and courtesy, graciously cried out, is he yet alive? he is my Brother, not only do I pardon him, but I honour and respect him as a Brother, and he caused
Benhadad

Benhadad to come up to him in his chariot, and they drove off to the royal Pavillion, and there the two Kings entered into a covenant, a friendly Alliance with each other, and Benhadad said, " the Cities my Father took from thy Father, all " of them I will restore, thou shalt build a Citadel " and place a guard in Damascus, and traffick in " my streets, and I agree to pay a yearly tribute to " Israel." The treaty was ratified, after which without any ransom whatever, Ahab dismissed the Syrian King and sent him home.

It was on this occasion, a young Prophet with his face besmeared with blood and mire, desired he might be brought into the King's presence, and he fell down and paid him homage, a Syrian Prisoner (he said) had been committed to his custody, with a strict charge from his Officer not to let him escape on pain of death; by his neglect, the Prisoner had escaped, he had fled, behold thy servant every moment in danger of being punished, Ahab pronounced him guilty of death, the young man wiped his face, threw off his disguise, with manly courage told Ahab, he had pronounced judgment on himself, God had delivered into his hand, a powerful enemy of Israels, behold He is gone free, and your life shall pay for the life of the Prisoner.

Ahab now saw he was a young Prophet, and he was wonderfully struck with the intrepidity

city of the youth and the stratagem, but he did not break the promise he had given Benhadad.

Ahab set off for his Capital, very thoughtful on this signal event, and with much apparent grief and indignation.

The King had two Palaces, the one at the City of Samaria, the other at Jezreel.

A wealthy neighbour, named Naboth, had a Vine-yard at Jezreel, adjoining to the gardens of the Palace. Ahab made him an offer to buy it, or he would exchange it with him for one of greater value elsewhere, it was a very convenient spot for a kitchen garden, and lay very advantageously, a right aspect, and contiguous to his own. God had expressly allotted the division of the lands, and he had forbid the alienation of them to other tribes and families, Naboth was conscientious, and he thought it disgraceful to part with it, a family estate he wished to descend to his children, and ('tho' uncourteous) he took courage and refused the request of his Prince. The King was sorely vexed and disappointed, he would neither eat nor drink, nor dress, nor wash himself, fullen and worried he turned away from his company and lay all day long with his face against the wall.

Jezebel his wife, found him out, and enquired the cause, why so sad? and why do you fast?

Ahab told the Queen of the refusal of Naboth, Jezebel replied, art thou a King over Israel? canst pluck up no courage to use your power, and revenge your affronts, go eat bread and let thy heart be merry, I will give thee the Vine-yard of Naboth. Her Majesty immediately set down, and wrote letters to the Elders of Jezreel, and sealed them with the royal signet, commanding a fast to be proclaimed, a publick meeting of all the Magistrates and Gentry, and the uppermost seat she directed to be given to Naboth.

Naboth's Presence and Person thus made sure of, they were commanded to suborn false witnesses and impeach him of high treason and blasphemy, and then carry him out to a high place where malefactors were executed, and stone him to death,

The Jezreelites dared not disobey the Queen, they soon dispatched a Messenger to the Palace, " Naboth is stoned, and is dead " and to give Ahab an undisturbed Possession, his Sons are said to have been stoned with him: Her Majesty herself carried the news to Ahab, the King instantly arose, washed himself, eat and drank, and then repaired to the Vine-yard, in order to take Possession — On the Spot, Elijah the Prophet met Ahab, the King was awed and highly struck, and he cried out, hast thou found me O mine Enemy? and Elijah answered him, I have

have, because thou hast wilfully become the bond-slave of the Devil, doing what thy Wife persuades thee. Though thy guilt is so cunningly concealed from men, it lies open and naked to the Eye of God—the Prophet then expressly told him, the sad destruction the murder of Naboth would bring upon himself—his Queen—and on all his family; dogs should lick the blood of Ahab, and on the self-same spot, where they had licked the blood of Naboth, Jezebel his Queen should be devoured with dogs, the posterity of Ahab should utterly be cut off.

This most horrid denunciation, and from the mouth of the Prophet, struck Ahab with the utmost horror and distraction, Ahab rent his clothes, returned sorrowing home, he went bare-foot, put sack-cloth on his flesh, fasted, and lay in sack-cloth, Ahab by penitence, contrition, and timely repentance obtained a gracious respite, and a delay of the judgments, and sad calamities during his life, but they all literally took place after his death.

The Kings of Israel and Syria were both so weakened, and their treasuries exhausted by the late wars, they needed peace and time to recruit and repair their losses, and the History informs us, “three years passed without war, between Syria and Israel; at that time Jehosaphat King of

Judah paid a visit at the Court of Samaria. Ahab had just then held a council of his Nobles and Elders, and made a speech, in which he informed them, Syria had retained Ramoth, a City in Gilead, and one which had been appointed a City of refuge, contrary to the covenant Benhadad had made with him after the last conflict; and Ahab said to Jehosophat (his guest) wilt thou go up with me to Ramoth, and assist me in gaining my right? Jehosophat having formed a firm alliance with Israel, and lately married his Son Joram to Athaliah a Daughter of Ahab's, said to the King, " I am as thou art, my People " and my horses thine," myself, and forces, as much at your service as my own, but let us enquire said the King, the mind of God in it, what success we may expect; upon which Ahab gathered together the Prophets, about four hundred Priests and false Prophets, and Ahab desired him to hear and witness himself how very favourable all their predictions respecting it were.

At the high Gate, in the grand Court of Judicature, two Thrones were erected for the Kings of Judah and Israel, and there, in their royal Robes and all the ensigns of Majesty, they both sat enthroned; one after another no less than four hundred Priests and false Prophets were all brought before them — eagerly and with wondrous

wondrous Zeal, (as they had been directed) in
 the name of Jehovah and not of Baal, the more
 to deceive Jehosophat into a good opinion of
 the War, they all promised Victory—their
 earnestness and positivity occasioned some sus-
 picion, and Jehosophat enquired after Micaiah
 the Son of Imlah, another Prophet and one
 whom he knew something of, when Micaiah came,
 by way of derision, and in the words of the
 false Prophets, go says he and prosper, the Lord
 shall deliver up Ramoth—Jehosophat solemnly
 adjured him in the Name of God—tell me the
 truth, upon which the Prophet seriously told him,
 Ahab would lose both the day and his life, the
 King would meet death, where he was looking
 for victory. Ahab was sorely displeased, and he
 said to Jehosophat, I told you he would prophesy
 evil, malicious and treasonable is his prophecy
 (says Ahab) and the King craftily tried to lessen
 its influence; upon which Micaiah spoke
 again, in a vision I saw all Israel scattered upon
 the Mountains of Gilead, as sheep without a
 shepherd. Upon hearing this, Zedekiah, a ring-
 leader among the false Prophets, and much in
 favour with Ahab, ran up to Micaiah, and smote
 him on the cheek, ironically asking, which way
 went the spirit of the Lord from me to thee?
 Micaiah replied, when thou shalt go from cham-
 ber

her to chamber to hide myself, on that day shalt thou know. Ahab put a stop to the controversy. Put this fellow in Prison, feed him with the bread and drench him with the water of affliction, until I return in peace, Micaiah said, if O' King thou return at all, the Lord hath not spoken by me. Zedekiah (imitating the true Prophets and prophesying by action) placed iron horns upon his head, and he ran about (crying) with these shalt thou push the Syrians, until they be destroyed.

Notwithstanding this information from the Prophet Micaiah, King Jehoshaphat accompanied Ahab to the siege of Ramoth Gilead.

A bloody battle was fought before the town—Ahab had changed his dress and fought in disguise but he persuaded Jehoshaphat to keep on his robes and ensigns of royalty, thus conspicuously distinguished, he was soon in the heat of the battle and in the extremest danger; in this critical moment, by a random shot, Ahab was mortally wounded, still furiously the battle raged, bleeding and dying, his servants held up Ahab in his chariot, to animate his soldiers for Glory and Victory. Ahab lived only until sun-set, when a proclamation was issued throughout the Host. "Every man to his City—Every man to his own Country."

The Israelites conveyed the King's corpse to Samaria, and buried him in the royal Sepulchre.

His

His chariot swimming with blood, together with his armour were washed in a Pool adjacent to the Palace, and the dogs came and licked his blood.



ESSAY XVI.

CONCLUSION OF THE REIGNS

OF THE

KINGS OF ISRAEL.

AHAZIAH.

JEHORAM.

JEHU.

JEHOAHAZ.

JEHOASH.

JEROBOAM II.

ZECHARIAH.

SHALLUM.

MANAHAM.

PECHALIAH.

PEKAH.

HOSHEA.

AHAZIAH.

A H A Z I A H.

IN an idolatrous Court, this young Prince acquired all its evil habits, vices, and abominations; Ahaziah succeeded his Father Ahab in the year of the World, three thousand one hundred and six; and eight hundred and ninety-eight years before the birth of Christ.

Very little is recorded of Ahaziah besides his impiety and idolatry until a fatal and sudden rebuke, which had all the appearance of accident occasioned his death and put an end to his reign, example, and impiety.

The roof of the Palace was flat and surrounded with a battlement, the King was leaning over it, and the rotten railing broke, he fell into the

Court-yard or garden of the Palace, and was sorely hurt and bruised, while in anguish and torture Ahaziah sent his servants, and directed them to consult Baalzebub, the God of Ekron, respecting his recovery; Elijah the Prophet was sent to meet the Messengers as they were on road, and to order them back to the Palace, with an express answer to the King's enquiry, " Since he had sent to the God of Ekron, and enquired of Baalzebub respecting his recovery, as if there had been no God in Israel, Ahaziah would come down from his bed only to his grave; upon the sudden return of the Messengers the King enquired, why they were turned back before they could have reached Ekron, and they said, a man had met them, who seemed well acquainted with their errand, and gave them the answer which they now delivered. Ahaziah asked what sort of a man he was? and they told him a hairy man, girt round with a leathern girdle, and the King knew him to be Elijah the Tishbite.

A Captain and his fifty, were instantly ordered to go bring the Prophet to the Palace, the Captain found him sitting on a hill and by way of derision accosted him, " Thou man of God come down, intimating if he refused, he would carry him by force. Elijah appealing to his own dignity and character, and seeing God's name and honour insulted, he said, if I be a man of God, let fire
come

come down from Heaven and consume thee and thy fifty; God gave a proof to the honour of his Prophet, fire poured down from Heaven, and consumed the Captain and all his men.

Again the King sent another Captain with his fifty, and he discovered still more petulance, and no appearance of terror at the awful example before him; Elijah returned the same answer, and fire came down from Heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

The King forwarded a third Captain and his fifty, and he fell on his knees before Elijah, expressed a reverence to his person and a dread of God's judgments, he prayed that his life and the lives of these fifty, his servants, might be precious in his sight; Elijah was pleased with the respectful behaviour and mild disposition of this Captain, he went down with him and his band to the Palace, and being ushered in to the royal presence, the Prophet with firmness and magnanimity delivered his very awful commission.

“ Forasmuch as thou hast sent Messengers to enquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron; is it not, because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou liest, but shall surely die.”

Ahaziah struck with amazement and terror daunted by the presence of the Prophet, and the sentence he had announced, together with the late

proofs of the awful power of God, he silently gave Elijah a dismissal; it was very soon after according to the Prophets prediction, King Abaziah died, and as he had no Son was succeeded by his Brother Jehoram, Abaziah had only reigned two years.

J E H O R A M.

THIS Prince was proclaimed King of Israel in the year of the World, three thousand one hundred and eight; and eight hundred and ninety-six years before the birth of our Saviour.

Jehoram ascended the Throne of Israel in the eighteenth year of the reign of Jehosophat in

3108.

Jerusalem,

Jerusalem, and at the death of this truly, pious, and very excellent King, Judah and Israel most of all resembled one Kingdom. One sad scene of impiety and idolatry prevailed in both, and the two Kingdoms were governed by Kings of the same name.

Jehoram, King of Israel, principled from early life in all the abominations, and idol worship of his Mother Jezebel, the Daughter of the King of Sidon, was so altogether influenced by her advice, that she may be said to have governed his People, and exercised the Supreme Authority. Such impiety and unwise attachment brought down upon himself and upon all Israel the heaviest judgments of Almighty God.

In the early part of Jehoram's reign, a friendly alliance took place between Israel, Judah, and Edom, and Jehoram led his Army out of Samaria to the Plains, appointed a general rendezvous, and numbered all Israel. From hence the King forwarded an Embassy to Jerusalem, and asked the assistance of Jehosaphat against Moab. David had added the two Kingdoms of Moab and Edom to his Empire, and when the division and revolt took place between the two Kingdoms, Moab was adjoined to that of Israel, and Edom
to

to the Kingdom of Judah. These tributary neighbours watched every opportunity of revolting, whenever Israel or the Kingdom of Judah were weakened or embarrassed by wars at home or abroad.

Moab had refused her yearly tribute, she had rebelled, and Jehoram applied to Jehoshaphat for aid to compel the Moabites dutifully to return to their allegiance. The King very heartily gave his assent. " I am as thou art, my People thine, my horses as thy horses. Jehoshaphat called a Council and enquired which way they should go up, Jehoram's Council proposed the the Army should march through the Wilderness of Edom. By this means Jehoram was securing the Alliance of Edom, and invading Moab on their weakest side, and where they least expected an assault. A numerous Army assembled, and the Kings cautiously made a very wide circuit, which took them up seven days, travelling all this while, in the dry and sandy Wilderness. The King of Edom and his Forces had now joined them, and this immense body of men, with the three Kings themselves, were all of them very near lost, over-fatigued, exhausted and gasping for want of water. Jehoram was passionately dismayed, and he said, God had called him,

and

and the Kings of Judah and Edom, to deliver them all three into the hands of Moab. Good Jehoshaphat was sorely distressed, and he enquired for a Prophet of the Lord. One of Jehoram's servant's told him, Elisha, Son of Shaphat, he was here, Jehoshaphat replied, he is a true Prophet.

The three Kings set out, and they walked down together to Elisha's tent, engaging (as they hoped) by their condescension, the favour and assistance of the Prophet. On seeing Jehoram, Elisha hastily called out to him. "What have I to do with thee? get thee to the calves thy Fathers worshipped, or to Baal, the God of thy Mother," but the King replied, I am well aware you feel no respect for me, but pity good Jehoshaphat and this innocent King of Edom, involved in the self-same calamity with myself. Elisha respectfully noticed Jehoshaphat, whose piety and virtues he revered, and then directed them to dig trenches and ditches in the valley, after which (says the Prophet) they shall be full of water, ye and your cattle and your beasts shall all drink; seeing them rejoice, with a pleasing courtesy, Elisha added, what you seem so delighted with, is comparatively a light thing, God will also deliver Moab into your hands. The very next morning, at the usual hour of offering up prayers, water came by the way of Edom, and the Country was filled with water.

Not

Not dreaming of what had happened, the Moabites from the unusual reflection of the Sun looking red on the water, thought of nothing but blood, surely say they, the three Kings must have butchered one another. Highly incensed one and all cried out, "Now Moab to the Spoil" without sending any Spies, the Moabites rashly all rushed forwards without any martial order even to the Camp of Israel, a most bloody battle ensued, a total overthrow. The King of Moab hastily fled, and he was almost the only one who arrived at his Capital. The combined Armies pursued, and they took all the Cities of Moab, and stopped up all the Wells of the Country, and felled all their stately Trees, and laid regular Siege to Kir-hazareth the Metropolis. The Moabitish King, frantic and in despair, returning from a furious but unsuccessful sally, took his eldest Son, Heir to the Crown, slew him, and on the City Wall publickly offered him up a burnt-offering to secure (as he foolishly hoped) the favour of Chemosh, his God.

The Israelites, shocked at the horrid and bloody fight, every man, full of distress, turned his back and silently and thoughtfully marched home-wards.

Some short time after Jehoram's settlement at home, Benhadad King of Syria, held a council of

of his Nobles, and proposed to his People a new War with Israel. In a set speech the King informed them of his plans, he would assemble his Forces, send out a strong detachment to such a place; he would suddenly seize upon the Israelites by surprise; and here (says the King) lying in ambush, they shall cut them all to pieces as they pass. Elisha the Prophet wrote a letter to Jehoram. "Beware thou pass not such a place, for thither the Syrians are come down," by this means, more than twice or thrice Benhadad's plans were broke, his plot detected, and by his wife and well-timed communications the Prophet always prevented the mischief, for Jehoram sent out his scouts and a troop of Guards to secure those very passes before the Syrian soldiery could arrive. Benhadad was all wonder and astonishment, how his secret designs, and even his intentions could be known and frustrated. The Prince grew warm and jealous, all suspicion and fury, he hastily asked, who among us is for Israel? and his Nobles answered him, my Lord O' King, none of us, thy servants are no spies; but Elisha the Prophet that is in Israel, tells the King of Israel, the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber. Benhadad highly enraged ordered out a Troop of Guards in search of the Prophet. Elisha was at Dothan, a small City near Sechem. The

Syrian Guards surrounded the City, early in the morning at day-break they entered Dothan, and at the Prophet's prayer, by a sudden blaze of light, God smote all the Troops with blindness. Elisha came, he himself was their guide, and conducted them all into the City of Samaria; when thus entrapped and secured, the Prophet prays that their eyes might be opened, and behold they saw themselves in the Capital City of Israel, enclosed by the Army and in view of the King. Jehoram ran eagerly up to Elisha (and he cries out) "My Father—my Father—shall I smite them? shall I smite them?" The Prophet answered No, Set bread and water before them that they may eat and drink, and go home to their master. It is against the laws of humanity to kill Captives, though thou hast taken them with thy own sword and bow, more unworthy still, in cold blood, to kill these, whom not thy arms, but God's providence has put into thy hands. Refresh and strengthen them. Do good to your Enemies, Syria may return your kindness on the Israelitish Captives, and fear to oppose a People so humane, and thus invincibly protected.

Jehoram ordered a plentiful supply of provisions to be set before them, a hospitable meal,
and

and after they had eat and drank, the King sent them all away.

Benhadad, notwithstanding he had witnessed so signal an interposition in favour of Israel, some time after, at the head of a very powerful Army, he entered Samaria and marched his Troops through all the Country, and surrounded the Metropolis, here he encamped, prevented all access of provisions, and totally blocked up the City of Samaria. As his coming was so rapid and unexpected, the inhabitants very numerous, and wholly unprovided for, a wasting and severe famine speedily ensued. An asses head was sold for eighty pieces of silver (near ten pounds) and a small measure of tares for twelve shillings and sixpence (five shekels.) The People were all of them starving, reduced to the greatest extremity. As the King was taking a melancholy walk round the ramparts and the City Wall to watch his men, give his orders, and observe the motions of the Enemy, a distracted woman fell down at his feet and paid him homage, she wrung her hands in agony, imploring justice—justice my Lord O King. I have boiled and eat my child—this woman partook, on oath and solemn promise, she for the next meal would cook her own. Behold my Lord O King, this woman has hid her child and I am starving.

So shocking a story, and told with wildness, horror and despair, struck Jehoram with the deepest distress. The King rent his clothes, and the rents disclosed the sack-cloth underneath; thus publickly mourning, bitterly was Jehoram heard to sigh, and he expressed the liveliest sorrow. His first burst of passion fell upon the Prophet, and he vowed he would destroy him. One of his guard he instantly dispatched to murder him. Elisha was sitting at home, reading his lectures, and the Elders his friends sat with him. Shut, shut the door, cries the Prophet, hold it fast. The King has sent to murder me, and do not I hear his master's feet following after him? while he yet was talking, the Messenger and the King they both rushed in. This judgment (says Jehoram) is from God. He inflicts it. He will not remove it, Women are eating up their children. Why bidst thou me wait on God for help? I am weary of waiting. Why wait longer? Elisha convinced the King, of his own innocence, and forced from Jehoram an acknowledgment, that it was the rod of the Almighty, a just punishment for his own impiety and idolatry. The Prophet then strikingly revived Jehoram, so large a supply (says he) of provision will be brought into the City, even as soon as to-morrow, that a bushel of fine flour will then be sold for five-pence, and two bushel
of

of barley at the same price, at the publick market of Samaria.

That very night, struck with terror and a dreadful panick, the Syrians imagined they heard the noise of horses, rattling of chariot-wheels and a mighty Host, they fled away for life in the utmost distraction, and left all their provision and baggage, even many of their horses, their asses, and vast herds of cattle. So confused and terrified they strewed all the road with cups and spoons, and garments, with vessels and pots and trinkets they had dropped.

The next morning so over-bounding was the plenty and the spoil, a bushel of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two bushel of barley for the same price, at the gate of Samaria.

Jehoram was leaning on one of his Nobles when the Prophet gave him the joyous news. The Noble Lord turned round to Elisha sneeringly discrediting the report, "the thing might indeed be, if the Lord would make windows in Heaven." The Prophet told him, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not taste thereof.

That very Nobleman was appointed Steward of the Gate, he took all the provision in charge as it was brought to the Market from the Camp, but so
riotous

riotous and tumultuous were the hungry croud, he was trod to death by the mob.

Four starving Lepers, said to be Gehazi and his three Sons, first discovered the flight of the Syrians, as their last recourse rather than perish they resolved to venture even to beg at the Enemy's Camp. The loathsome disease made it death to enter the City, and they lodged in the Suburbs. Creeping nearer and nearer, great was their surprize, at finding every thing so quiet, and they could see nobody. They peeped into the tents, went from one to another, found them all full of provision and baggage and horses and asses, after satisfying their own hunger, and pilfering and hiding what they liked, they bethought themselves of carrying the joyful news to the City Gate, they first told the soldiers on guard, and they hastened to tell it at the Palace.

Jehoram rose at mid-night, the King reasonably suspected some stratagem, the Syrians might lie in ambush, and entice him and his hungry Army out of the Gates, and fall upon them in their starved condition.

Jehoram summoned a council, cautiously sent out his spies, and two horses only, they examined the fact, could hear no tidings of the Enemy, every mark of a precipitate flight, and the King and his People rejoiced exceedingly.

Having

Having recruited and strengthened his Army and Finances, Jehoram set out on a second expedition to Ramoth-Gilead, and encountered Hazael the reigning Prince of Syria. Ahaziah Son of Jehoram, King of Judah, had lately ascended the Throne of his Father, and Jehoram King of Israel invited him to accompany him to the siege. Enamoured of Glory, the young Prince readily entered into the confederacy. The exploit proved a fatal source of destruction to Jehoram's whole family and the death of both Monarchs. Jehoram took Ramoth-Gilead, he became Master of the City, but towards the end of the assault, the King received a dangerous wound, and was carried off, bleeding in his chariot, to his Palace at Jezreel. Jehoram committed the care of the City to Jehu, his Commander in Chief, and placed a strong guard in the Citadel.

In the absence of both Princes, the Prophet Elisha was now directed to anoint Jehu, King of Israel, the Prophet was too well known to execute this Commission in person, and he dispatched in haste to Ramoth Gilead, one of the young Prophets ordered him to inquire for Jehu Son of Nemshi, General of the Forces, and retire with him to an inner chamber, then take out his box of oil, and anoint him King over Israel.

Israel. The young Prophet was then to direct him, to go in person, and smite the whole family of Ahab, and expressly to tell Jehu, that in the portion of Jezreel, Dogs should devour the blood of Jezebel, and there should be none to bury her. With wonderful speed the young Man executed his orders, when he arrived at the Town, the officers were assembled and sitting in Council, he hurries into the Court, I have an errand to thee O' Captain. Jehu asked, to which of us? and he said, to thee O' Captain. Jehu arose, and they two, went into a back room together. The young Prophet instantly pulled out his box of oil, and anointed Jehu King of Israel, and delivered his highly awful message, after which, he hastily threw open the door, left the house and the City.

As soon as he was gone the company asked, is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow here? we saw plainly by his gesture and carriage, there was something of great importance in his Message, I pray you tell us, and Jehu gravely said, Thus and thus spake he, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee, King over Israel. They all halted, and took every man his Garment, and some they placed on the steps, and made him a Throne, and others they strewed on the ground, for him to tread on. An eastern ceremony

ceremony in token of great reverence (thus put
we ourselves and our property under thy feet)
and instantly they blew the trumpets

“ Jehu is King over Israel.”

Jehu called a council of his Captains, enjoined them secrecy, and then mounted his chariot and drove furiously to Jezreel. The watchman on the high Tower, spied the Horse-men and the chariots, and called out aloud, a troop of horse, I see a company. The King sent a Messenger full speed to meet them, (and he said) what news from Syria, is all peace? Jehu answered, what hast thou to do with peace? get thee behind me. The King all impatience hurried away another Horse-man, and again he asks, is it peace? and Jehu replies to him, what hast thou to do with peace? turn thou behind me. The watchman now cries out, the Messengers come not again, the driving is like the driving of Jehu, the Son of Nemshi, for he driveth furiously. The King then said, make ready, and his chariot was made ready. Jehoram and Ahaziah both mounted their chariots, and drove towards Jehu, and they met in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. Jehoram there called out to Jehu, is all peace? Jehu answers, what peace, so long as the abominations of thy Mother, and her witch-crafts

are so many? hearing this, Jehoram fled, crying out O' Ahaziah; there is treachery—there is treachery. Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow pierced his heart, he instantly sunk down in his chariot.

Jehu commanded Bidkar, the Captain of his Host, to throw the dead body over the garden wall, into the Vine-yard that had once belonged to Naboth, and there to lie unburied.

Whilst this was doing, Ahaziah fled by a private road, Jehu cried out, smite him, smite him, and he ordered him to be pursued. Ahaziah first fled to Megiddo, and thence to Samaria, he was here overtaken, and brought before Jehu at Jezreel. Jehu pronounced sentence on the King, and it was executed at Megiddo, but he permitted the corpse to be carried to Jerusalem, and they buried Ahaziah in the Sepulchre of his Fathers.

Jehu, and a resolute band, boldly marched up to the Palace. The Queen Mother, gorgeously attired and beautified with rouge, (thinking to awe Jehu by her Majesty and presence) placed herself at the Palace window, and when Jehu approached, with insult, (though under great alarm) cried out, " Had Zimri peace, who slew " his master?" Jehu asked, who is on my side? two or three pages of the bed-chamber, Eunuchs, looked

looked out. Jehu said, throw her down, Jehu was instantly obeyed. The Queen's blood was sprinkled on the wall and on the horses, Jehu trod her under foot, and the mangled body was torn to pieces. Jehu entered the Palace, and he both eat and drank, then calling to mind the bloody spectacle, see now (says he) for this cursed woman, for she is a King's Daughter, go bury her, and they went out, and found only her scull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Jehu told the men who brought them, this is the word of the Lord. " In the portion of Jezreel, " shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel, and the car- " case of Jezebel shall be as dung in the field, even in Jezreel, they shall not be able to say, this is Jezebel.

Jehu sat down and wrote letters to the Tutors, Nobles, Guardians and Elders who had the care of the young Princes, the blood royal, and the charge of their education, for the King foreseeing the hazards of war, before he set out for Ramoth-Gilead to encounter the Syrians, placed all of them for safety in Samaria. Jehu wrote—

To the Elders of Israel in Samaria.

*" As soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing the
" young Princes, the Sons and Grandsons of Ahab,
" and all of the blood royal are with you, and ye
" are in a fenced City, with chariots and horses*

A a a a 2

" and

*“ and much armour, look out him of all the
“ young Princes you think meetest, and set him on
“ the Throne of his Father, and fight for your
“ Master's house!”*

Thus Jehu was making trial of their loyalty, signifying his own intentions, and endeavouring to terrify them into compliance. But the Nobles and Guardians together with the Elders of the City, were highly intimidated, seeing Jehu had already murdered two Kings and the Queen Dowager, and that he held the command of all the powers and forces of the land, they had no courage to oppose him, but returned a dutiful and most submissive answer, referring themselves, their City, and all the young Princes wholly to his mercy.

Having witnessed their cowardice and made a trial of their submission, Jehu sat down and wrote letters to them a second time.

*“ Bring hither in baskets, the heads of all
“ the young Princes in Samaria, and before this
“ time to-morrow.*

The bloody present was brought that very night to the Palace at Jezreel, and Jehu (as it was late) gave orders to have them carried back

back to the Sessions-house, the high Court of Judicature at Samaria, and there to pile them up in heaps. The heads of no less than seventy young Princes were thus publicly exposed and laid in two bloody and separate heaps as Jehu had commanded.

Early the next morning the Elders, Nobles and Magistrates presented themselves in a body on the same spot. Jehu, surrounded by his Guards, went out to meet them, and they all stood at the high gate of Samaria. Jehu in a set speech, first addressed the Magistrates and Elders, (and he said)

“ Ye are righteous in your own eyes, and look on me as a traitor, a rebel, and a murderer—I acknowledge I have killed my master. But if I am guilty, are ye innocent? I have killed One. Ye a greater number.” Jehu then turned himself to the People, and he said,

“ Whatever is amiss in all you see, I acquit ye as innocent and harmless. Fear not ye the vengeance of God, nor the curses of men. The truth is, neither I nor they, are to be blamed, This is not the work of man, but of God.”

After this, Jehu slew all that remained of the blood royal and Family of Ahab in Israel, until he left none to destroy.

JEHU.

J E H U.

WITH wonderful dispatch, and undaunted courage, this valiant Chief had executed the commands of the Prophet, the just and awful vengeance of the Almighty, and thus by extirpating root and branch of the house of Ahab, in the year of the World, three thousand one hundred and twenty; and eight hundred and eighty-four years before the birth of Christ, obtained a secure possession of the Crown, and ascended the Throne of Israel.

Jehu kept his Court at Samaria, and not long after his establishment, at a sheep-shearing feast, the King met, as they were on the road, the Brethren of Ahaziah, the late King of Judah, unknown any thing of what had happened, they were coming to Samaria to pay their respects to the royal family. Jehu calls to his guard—these

Men are my Prisoners—take them alive. Jehu then commanded them to be led to the pit of the sheep-shearing house, (the place where he intended to bury them) and there he ordered them to be slain even two and forty men. They were of the house of Ahab by the Mothers side, and Nephews of Ahaziah; Jehu thought they might revenge the death of their relations, and in right of their Grand-mother, lay claim to the Kingdom of Israel. Going home from hence, the King met Jehonadab, a man of great eminence and piety, he was a Kenite, and a lineal descendant of Jethro. Jehonadab, was purposely coming to Court, to congratulate his Majesty, Jehu stopped his chariot and saluted him, and he said, is thy heart right, as my heart is with thine? Jehonadab answered, it is. Jehu (in token of affection) says, give me thine hand, come up into my Chariot, witness yourself my actions, see my Zeal for God, and my desire to fulfil his commands; the servants opened the door, Jehonadab was lifted in, and they drove on to Samaria.

The King issued out a proclamation, and under pretence of great sanctity, and religious Zeal and homage to Baal, he said, Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu shall serve him much, and the King assembled all his numerous Priests, Prophets and Votaries to a solemn sacrifice, he himself commanded them religiously to offer up to Baal,
and

and they were summoned to meet in the magnificent Temple of their God. Not one of all the Priests, Prophets, or worshippers of Baal were at this pompous ceremony to be absent, the penalty was death. As soon as the Temple courts and all were full, Jehu cautiously went round himself and Jehonadab accompanied him. The King cries out, see carefully if there be none of the servants of the Lord, whether there be only present the worshippers, Prophets and Priests of Baal—The King and Jehonadab then came out, and Jehu placed a Guard, of eighty Soldiers, all round the Temple, and now (says the King) he of you that letteth any one go, his life shall be for the life of him. In the midst of their solemn worship, just while they were offering up their sacrifices to Baal, Jehu sent in a Captain and his Guard, who rushed in upon the worshippers, and put them every one to death. The King then destroyed, all the objects of their worship, demolished the image of Baal, collected together all their other Idols, Relicks and Altars, and burnt them before all the People, after which he laid all their publick buildings, and the celebrated Temple itself in ashes, and made the place a draught house or common sewer.

Jehu

Jehu followed the directions given him by the Prophet, as far as he judged his interest would permit, his mistaken policy got the better of his religion. Jehu adhered to the worship of the golden calves, and commanded all Israel to repair on festivals and solemn seasons to Dan or Bethel, where they were publicly worshipped, nevertheless, on account of the zeal and readiness he had shewn, in executing the judgments so awfully denounced against the house of Ahab, the Crown of Israel was entailed on his Family, to the fourth generation.

Jehu's obedience, thus wanted, what would have made it most of all valuable; sincerity, his continuance in the practise of one species of idolatry, is alledged, as a fair proof of his false-heartedness in others, it was only partial, and it is said of Jehu, he took no heed to walk in the way of the God of Israel, with all his heart.

Hazael, who had so basely murdered Benhadad, and usurped the Crown of Syria, ravaged and harassed the borders of Israel, the Syrians were making daily incursions into the Country, laying waste all within their reach, from the banks of the River Jordan even to the sea-shore the territories of Gilead, Reuben, Gad and Manasseh. Jehu was unweariedly employed in defending his People, driving out the Enemy,

and repairing the breaches and damages they were perpetually incurring.

After a reign of eight and twenty years, this brave and warlike Prince died in Samaria, his Capital, and was buried in the royal Sepulchre. Jehoahaz his eldest Son ascended the Throne and was proclaimed instantly throughout Israel.

J E H O A H A Z.

THIS young Prince was crowned in Samaria, in the year of the World, three thousand one hundred and forty-eight; and eight hundred and fifty-six years before the birth of our Saviour.

Joash, Son of Ahaziah, King of Judah, was at this time in the three and twentieth year of his reign.

The calamities of his Country, had no effect in reclaiming Jehoahaz, he was an Idolater, and like all his Predecessors, could not think of countenancing any of his subjects in going up to Jerusalem three times a year, at their high festivals, as they were at first intended to have done. The splendour of the City and the Temple, the attractions of the Priests and the Levites, the meeting of friends and acquaintance, might conduce to settle many differences, and form an alliance injurious and destructive to his Government. The King therefore adhered to the religion and policy of his Father, and directed his People to repair, at such seasons, to Dan and Bethel, the two Cities, at the extremities of his Kingdom, where Jeroboam had unwisely set up the golden calves, and introduced a worship similar to what he had always witnessed in Egypt.

The grove also in Samaria which Ahab had planted, and which had been dedicated to the worship of Baal still remained, and God had expressly commanded that it should be destroyed.

Such conduct and omissions were signally noticed, God is said to have been angry with Jehoahaz, and Hazael King of Syria, and afterwards Benhadad his Son made daily depredations and ravages on the borders of Israel, and from time to time Syria laid waste all the Country. At length on the King's dutiful and submissive re-

return and penitential sorrow, together with the publick and solemn humiliation of all his People, God had compassion on Israel, mercifully called to mind the covenant with some of his pious Predecessors, and sent them a deliverance, but not in the reign of their present Prince, it was deferred to that of his Son Jehoash, and not completed until the following reign, under Jeroboam the second, great Grandson of Jehu.

By so many wasting ravages and destructive invasions, Israel was at last so exhausted and harassed by Syria, Jehoahaz was reduced to only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot Soldiers, and the sufferings and very heavy yoke the King laboured under, made his life and reign most troublesome and miserable.

Jehoahaz lived seventeen years after he had ascended the Throne of Israel, at which time he died and was buried in the royal Sepulchre in Samaria, and succeeded by Jehoash his Son.



JEHOASH.

J E H O A S H.

IN the year of the World, three thousand one hundred and sixty-five, and eight hundred and thirty-nine years before the birth of Christ. Jehoash was crowned at Samaria, King of Israel.

The first action recorded of this young Prince, and a very amiable one, is, a respectful visit he paid to the Prophet Elisha, when he had long been bowed down with age and infirmities, and he gave a pleasing proof of an unaffected and pious concern, and shed a flood of tears, at the near approach of the death of so wise a Prophet, and so holy and good a man. The Prince pleasingly endeavours to comfort and revive the good old Prophet, by reminding Elisha, of his

own words, at parting with his friend the Prophet Elijah, and the awful Majesty exhibited on that ever memorable event, " O' my Father—
 " my Father, the chariot of Israel and the horse-
 " men thereof," thus recalling the memory of Elijah, his good counsels, and prayers, by which he had procured them such glorious victories. The Prophet warmly felt the King's kindness, and all he was doing, with a highly pleasing courtesy, (enjoying the honours) Elisha in return told him of his future successes against his enemies. He should engage the Syrians in three pitched battles, and come off Conqueror in them all. The Prophet very fancifully speaks to the King by action." Take Bow and Arrows. Open the window eastward (where the Syrians were ravaging) and shoot. Now says the Prophet thou shalt smite Syria, at Aphek, till thou hast consumed it. This was the first sign, and it was to foretel his victories over Syria. The second had a reference to the number of them. Again the Prophet says, take Arrows and smite on the ground. The King humoured the Old Prophet and he smote thrice, and then stopped. Elisha was passionately disappointed, Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smote Syria till thou hadst consumed it, whereas now, thou wilt smite Syria only thrice, for God had signified to the Prophet, that the
 number

number of the victories, should correspond with the number of the Kings strokes.

Jehoash was however so much encouraged, by the predictions of the good old Man, that with great spirit he engaged Benhadad the Syrian Prince, in three pitched battles, routed him, drove him out of the country, and retook all the Cities, Hazael, his Father, had taken from Israel during the unhappy reign of Jehoahaz.

While Jehoash was enjoying his Victories over Syria, he received a very extraordinary letter and Challenge from the King of Judah. Amaziah elated with his success against Edom, returned home in triumph to Jerusalem, and as he was passing on the road, he heard of the insults and injuries done by the Israelites, to the towns and villages, through which they marched, after their dismissal and disappointment in not sharing the spoil and conquest of Edom, in revenge for the affront the King sent by his Ambassadors to the Court of Samaria, a challenge to Jehoash, and He wrote.

" Come let us look one another in the face,"

Jehoash treated the insult with haughty derision and contempt, and his answer to Amaziah was couched in Sovereign scorn.

" The thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, give thy
Daughter

“ Daughter to my Son to Wife, and there passed
 “ by a wild beast and trod down the thistle.”
 Thus I tread down thee—my Army thine—Thou
 hast smitten Edom, be content with thy glory
 tarry at home, why meddle to thy hurt? why
 fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? Amaziah,
 self-confident, in the hour of victory, and fired
 with the insult, marched his whole Army to
 Beth-shemesh, and there met Jehoash and the
 Israelites. A bloody battle was fought, Amaziah
 was totally defeated, his Army all routed, the
 King himself taken Prisoner, and Jehoash led his
 spirited Troops through all his Country, took pos-
 session of Jerusalem, and King Amaziah disgrace-
 fully followed forrowing at the heels of the Con-
 queror. Jehoash caused four hundred cubits of its
 strong walls from the gate of Ephraim to the corner
 gate, and its towering fortifications to be broke
 down, plundered the Temple of its richest trea-
 sures, and the royal Palaces, then laden with his
 spoils, and taking with him such hostages as he
 himself chose, Jehoash marched his Army back
 to Samaria, enjoying the high honours of a
 second triumph.

After a reign of near seventeen years, the two
 first of which were in the life-time of his Father,
 King Jehoash died and they buried him in the
 royal Sepulchre.

JEROBOAM

J E R O B O A M II.

THIS Prince was the Son of Jehoash, and great Grandson of Jehu. Jeroboam succeeded his Father and was proclaimed King of Israel, in the year of the World, three thousand one hundred and eighty-one; and eight hundred and twenty-three years before Christ, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Amaziah King of Judah.

This young Prince had during the last ten years shared the Government with his Father, and he reigned one and forty years afterwards. Two very eminent characters, both Prophets, were his contemporaries, Jonah the Son of Amittai who was of Gath-hepher, and the Prophet Hosea, and Jeroboam valiantly executed the noble work which they had both so signally encouraged him to undertake.

3181. Amaziah King of Judah.

VOL. I.

C c c c

The

The Prophets Jonah and Hosea foretold he would complete the deliverance of Israel from the Tyranny of Syria, which his Father though an Idolatrous Prince, had with great courage and bravery begun. Jeroboam took Damascus the Capital of that Empire, and restored the Coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath, which was its northern border unto the Dead Sea, once a goodly plain and built with famous Cities, the boundary of Israel to the south. Jeroboam possessed himself of all the territories between, and greatly advanced the glory of his Country.

We have sadly to lament the loss of the history, and gallant achievements of this enterprising Prince together with the book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

In the forty-first year of his reigning alone, this highly spirited and warlike Prince died, Jeroboam slept with his Fathers, even with the Kings of Israel, and they buried him in the City of Samaria.



Z E C H A R I A H.

THIS Prince ascended the Throne of Israel and succeeded his Father, Jeroboam the second, in the year of the World, three thousand two hundred and thirty-three; and seven hundred and seventy-one years before Christ, in the thirty-eighth year of the reign of Uzziah King of Judah.

After the death of Jeroboam there had been an inter-regnum of eleven years, before this Prince his Son, was crowned at Samaria.

Zechariah was an Idolater, and it is expressly said of him, as of all the rest, he departed not from the sins of his Predecessors, continued to adhere to the worship of the golden calves, commanding all his People to go up to the Cities of Dan or Bethel, to which-ever of them best suited their convenience for that purpose.

3233. Uzziah King of Judah.

C c c c 2

After

After Zechariah had reigned six months, he was openly in the publick streets massacred by

S H A L L U M.

This Prince was one of Zechariah's own domestics. Shallum seized upon the Crown of Israel and was proclaimed in Samaria.

Shallum well knew the promise made to Jehu extended to the fourth generation only, and he found the People disaffected, ripe for a revolt, and favourable to his attempt.

Shallum reigned a month of days (thirty) at which time he was himself murdered by

M E N A H E M,

In the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah, King of Judah.

Menahem was a General-Officer and the Son of Gad. This Prince also usurped the Throne of Israel; his place of residence and where he kept his Court was Tirtzah, in the tribe of Ephraim. The Palace had been originally built by Jeroboam, the first King of Israel. On Menahem's approach the Citizens of Tiphshah, the Elders and magistrates shut the City gates against him and refused to acknowledge and proclaim him their Sovereign; this spirited and bloody Prince, instantly put all the inhabitants of the Country to the

the sword, from the City Tiphah, even to the City of Tirzah, and all the women with child he ripped up, by cruelty and such horrid severity he was thus terrifying his subjects into obedience, committing on all ranks and orders of People the most wanton barbarities, private assassinations and public executions.

It was not long after his settlement at Tirzah that Pul, King of Assyria, invaded Israel, and Menahem was so unable to oppose him, that he forwarded an Embassy and sued for mercy, at the enormous price of a thousand talents of silver, Menahem purchased a present deliverance, and in order to pay the ransom he levied a heavy tax of fifty shekels per head, on each of his wealthy subjects.

The cruelty of this bloody Tyrant was so far from establishing him as he expected, that it weakened, endangered, and forced him to seek out foreign assistance and even to sue to an Enemy. After the Assyrian Monarch had marched his Troops out of Samaria, Menahem reigned about ten years, and then died at Tirzah, and they proclaimed his Son Pekaliah, King of Israel.

PEKALIAH.

PEKALIAH.

THIS Prince ascended the Throne in the year of the World, three thousand two hundred and forty-four; and seven hundred and sixty years before Christ.

After he had reigned two years, Pekaliah was murdered in his Palace by Pekah one of his General Officers.

3244.

PEKAH

THIS Officer was the Son of Remaliah. Pekah seized upon the Crown of Israel and was proclaimed in the year of the World, three

thousand

thousand two hundred and forty six; seven hundred and fifty-eight years before the birth of our Saviour, and in the fifty-second year of the reign of Uzziah King of Judah.

In the Palace of the Kings house, Pekah formed a conspiracy with Argob and Arieah two Officers of the Household and they were his assistants in perpetrating the treason. Here Pekah murdered Pekaliah, and he took with him fifty Men of the Gileadites whom he had hired and enlisted in the business.

Pekah was a most wicked, and abandoned Prince, and walked in all the abominations of his Predecessors. Israel was during his reign again invaded by Assyria, Tiglath-pileser entered it with a powerful Army, and he took Ijon, and a city of Ephraim and two cities of Naphthali and Gilead and Galilee, Cities and parts of Israel the nearest to Assyria, and the Assyrian Prince carried all the inhabitants Captive to Halah, and Habor to people desolate countries, even as far as the river Gozan.

A reign unhappy and so inglorious ended in a violent death, Pekah was murdered by Hoshea the Son of Elah.

Pekah had reigned twenty years, after his death there was an Anarchy, and general confusion took place for near nine years, during all which time Hoshea was strenuously endeavouring to get himself settled in the Government. A revolution very distasteful, and much objected to by the Israelites, but at length

H O S H E A

Procured influence enough to raise a powerful party in his favour, and they proclaimed him King of Israel, in the year of the World, three thousand two hundred and seventy-five; and seven hundred and twenty-nine years before Christ, in the twelfth year of the reign of Ahaz, King of Judah.

So much was this Prince despised, that after his coronation Hoshea found it a very difficult matter indeed, to support any royalty or station whatever.

In his principals and religious practices Hoshea was not equally Idolatrous with the Kings who had reigned before him, for he did not worship Baal, nor compel his People to go up to the Cities of Dan and Bethel and worship the Golden Calves Jeroboam had set up, the one indeed, that which was fixed up at Dan, had been demolished before his Government took place and Hoshea issued out no proclamation for-

3275. Ahaz King of Judah.

bidding

bidding his subjects going up to worship at Jerusalem, and yet the measure of their Iniquity is said to have been full, and the most tremendous Judgments and sore Vengeance of the Almighty soon followed, without a remedy or possibility of escape. Israel had sinned, and worshipped Baal, in conformity to the laws and customs of the Heathen, had bowed down to Idols and worshipped the Golden calves, under every green-tree had set up molten Images, and planted Groves in the High places, and burnt incense there, thus they rejected his statutes, followed vanity, worshipped all the host of Heaven, caused their Sons and Daughters to pass through the fire, using divinations and enchantments and selling themselves to do evil. Over and over again, God had bore testimony against them, warning them by his Prophets and Seers, by extraordinary revelations and Visions, by signal miracles, tried them by Severity, punished them, delivered them into the hands of spoilers, inviting them by clemency when they shewed a disposition to Penitence, and using (but in vain) every means of reclaiming.

Hoshea was laying many Schemes in order to free himself and his subjects from Assyrian bondage, he grew remiss in his payment of the tribute money, and for some short time altogether omitted it. Shalmaneser the Assyrian

Prince noticed it, and Hoshea was alarmed, he swore Fealty, promised instantly to make up his payments; but the King detected Hoshea in some secret conspiracy against him, and found he had sent Messengers and presents to Egypt, though he had omitted the payment even of his just dues and tribute to Assyria, such as he had before done year by year. Shalmaneser soon broke all his measures plots and designs, at the head of a formidable Army he entered Samaria, levelled and ravaged Cities and Country, laying waste all the lands of Israel. Shalmaneser marched his Troops up to the Gates of the Capital, and sat down before it, encamping a numerous Army all round its Walls and formed a total brockade.

Hoshea had made all the Preparations in his power, he had strongly fortified Samaria, brought into it large stores of Ammunition and Provision, and the City held out almost three years against so powerful and enterprizing a Rival; at last Samaria was compelled to surrender; King and Subjects were made Prisoners, and they were all carried away Captive into Assyria, in the ninth year of the reign of Hoshea.

The sad history and distress of King and People is described in the most pathetic language of misery and distraction, horrid indeed were the cruelties practised by the Conquerors over the Persons, Families, young Princes, Children, Infants

fants yet unborn as well as born, thus prematurely butchered with their parents. The City of Samaria, its Palaces, and stately buildings, became a heap of rubbish, the Country was laid waste, and the Assyrians returned home laden with all the spoil of Israel.

Of the Country into which they were carried captive, no tract can be seen, no very probable conjecture ever formed.

This is the sad, and fatal end of the Israelitish Empire, after it had been separated from that of Judah, and stood a divided Kingdom, two hundred and fifty-four years.

Of the Israelites who were happy enough, by flight or concealment to escape butchery or captivity, some arrived in Egypt, and some forsaking their rebellious principles and idolatry became subjects to good King Hezekiah and his successors, inhabitants of Judah. All the rest were carried away to people uninhabited territories, widely distant from the land of Canaan, and placed on the desolate frontiers of Halah, and in Habor by the River Gozan, and some in the mountainous and dreary parts of Medea, persecuted, enslaved, and condemned to end their days in misery, sorrow, and bondage.

The Assyrian Conqueror afterwards peopled the Cities of Israel with the-inhabitants of Cuthah, and Ava, Hamath and Sepharvaim, Nations he had

D d d d 2

brought

brought under his yoke, and these People uniting together soon revolted and elected a King of their own.

A strange medley of religion now took place and lasted about three hundred years, at which time the celebrated Temple was built on Mount Gerizim, and this union of Nations and People henceforward took upon them the name of **SAMARITANS.**



O N T H E B O O K S
O F T H E
K I N G S.
A S H O R T R E C A P I T U L A T I O N
O F T H E
H I S T O R Y.

THE first book concludes the life of David, gives his wife directions and charge to his Son Solomon, persuasive exhortations to piety and right conduct, and the King's last advice respecting two State Prisoners, Joab and Shimei.

By the express command of David, Solomon is anointed, and publicly proclaimed King of
Israel

Israel by Zadoc, the High-Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, and the eleven first Chapters of the first book, record his prosperous, most astonishingly glorious, peaceful, and happy reign.

After the death of Solomon, Rehoboam, his Son, at the age of forty, instantly set out for Sechem, a City in the tribe of Ephraim, almost the centre of the Kingdom, with the Princes, his Heads and Elders, his Nobles and all his Court, there to receive the honours of his Coronation. A vast body of his People here assembled, and as they thought themselves oppressed and overburthened with very heavy taxes, before they paid him homage, and admitted his proclamation by sound of trumpet, they humbly offered him up a petition for a redress of their grievances.

Rehoboam, upon this, summoned a Council from among the Elders, the Privy Counsellors of his Father, they gave their opinion unanimously for its being granted, assuring the Prince he would thereby gain and secure the affections and loyalty of his People for ever. Rehoboam next formed a Council, from among the young men, who were grown up with him, and they well knowing the vanity and pride of the Prince, flattered his passions by yielding to his wishes, and unwisely advised him to return a most haughty and insulting answer to the petition of his People,

“ my

“ my little finger shall be thicker than my Father’s loins; my Father chastised you with whips, I will chastise you with scorpions” (lashes ended with iron)—upon which ten tribes out of the twelve, instantly revolted from Rehoboam. The Prince sorely alarmed hastily fled to his chariot for safety, and drove off full speed to the Capital.

The ten revolting Tribes, blew the trumpets and instantly proclaimed Jeroboam, King of Israel.

Ever afterwards the Kingdom remained thus divided. Rehoboam was crowned at Jerusalem, and he assumed the title of King of Judah.

The two Tribes of Benjamin and Judah were henceforward united.

The posterity of David, in this last division, reigned three hundred and seventy-two years, during which period, nineteen Kings succeeded one another, with only one interruption, which lasted six years, Athaliah Queen Dowager and Mother of Ahaziah, having at that time usurped the Throne of Judah.

The Kingdom of Israel continued only two hundred and thirty-seven years, and their Kings were all Idolaters, which occasioned that striking Prophecy respecting them,

“ They should be as reeds shaken in the water.”

The History of Judah, and Israel, during the space of one hundred and eighteen years is recorded,

corded in the first Book, it gives the reigns of the four first Kings of Judah, ending with the death of Jehosophat, and also the reigns of the eight first Kings of Israel. This Book also relates the awful, interesting, and instructive lives, and characters, of the Prophet Elijah and Elisha.

The second book of the Kings, contains the remaining History of the Reigns in Judah and Israel, to the Captivity and destruction of both Kingdoms; that of Israel is continued, from the rebellion of Moab, in the reign of Abaziah, to the Captivity and final dispersion of Israel, among the Cities of the Medes, and the desolate and uninhabited Countries of Halah and Habor, in the Reign of Hoshea, the last King of Israel; a period of only one hundred and fifty-nine years, as the Kingdom of Judah remained alone a hundred and thirty five years after Israel.

The History of Judah, is here continued from the death of Jehosophat, to the Captivity in Babylon, under the reign of Zedekiah, a space of two hundred and forty-four years.

The last chapter relates the siege and sore Famine occasioned thereby, those, who were slain by the sword, were happier far, than those who pined to death with hunger. On the ninth day, of the fourth month, after a blockade of more than two years, this strong Hold of Zion, an
almost

almost impregnable Fort was taken by storm, and while a breach was made at one end of the City, and the Chaldeans kept pouring in their chariots and their men through a private gate at a distance, which led to the King's garden, many of the inhabitants, and the Army escaped by flight; and at the dead of night, Zedekiah himself, with a few of his Nobles, and his Body-Guard, stole out by some very private road and reached the plains of Jericho, the Chaldees, ever on the watch, spied them out, and dispatched a party to seize them, they were soon brought to the Camp, and sent under a guard to Riblah, the headquarters of Nebuchadnezer, and ushered in to the royal Presence, the King summoned a Council, Zedekiah was brought before them, and convicted of treachery and rebellion. Immediately after, they called in all his children, one by one, and executed them in his presence, they then struck out both the eyes of the Father, that no one object whatever might efface the bloody scene, or the sad idea and remembrance of it for ever. Zedekiah blind, and bound in fetters of brass, was then led away a State Prisoner to Babylon, to grace the triumph of this merciless Tyrant, and pine out a miserable existence in a dungeon.

In the fifth month after, a Chaldee Officer, Nebuzar-adan, arrived from Babylon, and was commissioned to burn to ashes the royal Palace,

and the houses of the Nobles, after plundering them of all that could be sent off, and he burnt the whole City, and this superb and magnificent Temple, the ornament and glory of the world, after they had first stripped and plundered it of all its treasures, cut off from their stands the golden vessels, pulled down the brazen pillars, cut to pieces the brazen sea, and forwarded all the spoil to Babylon. All Judah were now carried away into Captivity, a few of the poor only were left, to dress the vines and cultivate the land.

Gedaliah, a friend of the Prophet Jeremiah, obtained the appointment of Judæa, and the new Governor kept his Court at Mizpah. The Prophet was here supplied, by him, with all necessaries, and many of the Jewish Chiefs and Princes, who had fled during the siege, came also to Gedaliah, and he sware to them, and spoke kindly, fear not ye, dwell peaceably in the land, serve the King of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. Amongst others, Ishmael a Prince of the blood royal, and ten of his resolute companions, were all of a party and on a visit at the Governor's house; while they were hospitably received as guests, and entertained at a feast he had made for them, they basely murdered Gedaliah, and all the brave Chaldeans of his Court.

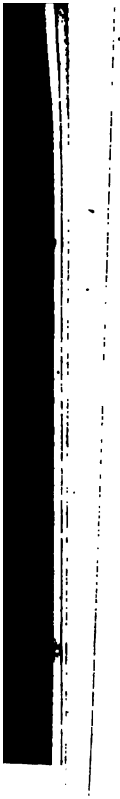
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On this treacherous assassination, the Jews who had placed themselves under his friendly protection, now fled away to Egypt, and the Prophet Jeremiah was amongst the number.

After this time the land is said to have lain desolate, the Sabbatic year had been much neglected, but throughout Judæa the land now kept a very long and perpetual Sabbath.



END OF VOL. I.



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viii	For dignities, read dignity.	xv	For wollen, read woollen.
xiv	offender, read offerer.	xix	occurring, read occurring.
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5	For hospitality, read hospitality.	271	intered, read interred.
23	fatcft, read fatteft.	344	give, read gave.
28	enchanted, read enchanting.	370	the me, read the tunc.
34	gratefu, read gratefully.	372	ark, read arch.
41	ambigituy, read ambiguity.	377	forrest, read forest.
82	fulfiling, read fulfilling.	447	King Babylon, read King of Babylon.
124	strickingly, read strikingly.	552	on road, read on the road.
131	thee, read three.	532	sent to murder me, read sent a Messenger to murder me.
152	known, read know.		
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12	After and, read Cyrus.	145	Barillus, read Batillus
23	facond, read second.	343	Belshazzar, read Bel- teshazzar.
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112	instance, read instant.		

